

THE
WAY
TO
Happineſſe:

Represented in its
DIFFICULTIES
AND
INCOURAGEMENTS;
And Cleared from many
Popular and Dangerous
MISTAKES.

By *Jos. Glanvill*, M. A.

L O N D O N,

Printed for *Gedeon Schaw*, Book-
seller, and are to be sold at his
Shop at the foot of the Ladies
ſteps in *Edinburgh*, 1671.



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THE
PUBLISHER
TO THE
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THE Author of this Discourse, being desired to Preach, at a place where he was, from home; He re-

collected the Sermon which he had last delivered in his own Congregation, and made use of that. It seems there were present who chanced to mistake his meaning in some things, not inconsiderable. To satisfy some of those, he writ down the

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Discourse while 'twas yet fresh in his memory, intending it for the sight of two or three, by whom he was unhappy as to be misapprehended. Before those went out of his hands I had accidentally, a sight of them in his Chamber, and thought they might be very fit for the publique view, to which I desired they might be exposed. Because the Subject is great, and grave; and the Discourse, in my Judgement, gives a very clear and intelligible account of the real difficulties of Religion, and the way to overcome them; both which are too usually handled in Phrases and Confusions. By which it will appear, that those whom some are pleased in scorn, to call the Rational Divines, do not make the way to Heaven so easie, as those Maligners of them, affirm of their Doctrines:

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to the Reader.

*But indeed represent it so as the
Scripture hath done to their hands.*

*Besides which, I found in this
Discourse, a very plain and practi-
cable method to act by, in order to
ones being good and happy ; even
such a one as seems to me very apt to
incourage our endeavours, and so-
berly and safely to direct us in them.
For it is not made up of Metaphors,
or dark Generals, or disputable No-
tions, or numerous confused particu-
lars : But of things fairly to be un-
derstood, and certainly to be practi-
sed, and easily to be remembered : and
such as tend all to the perfection of
our natures. I thought also that many
considerable things in Religion
were stated very sensibly and clearly
in these Papers, and a ground laid
to deliver the minds of men from ma-*

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ny vain and unsound Notions, which first w
have much perverted and depraved gave i
the true, sober, practical Divinity. sed: A
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But the chiefest thing for which I
desired its Publication, was, Because
it so plainly and distinctly detects
one of the greatest, most popular,
and most dangerous Impostures of
our age, by discovering how far the
meer Animal Religion may go; and
how little it really signifies, notwith-
standing its glorious shews and pre-
tences. By this part of the Discourse,
many may see how much they have
been mistaken in the opinion of their
own Godliness; & that the things of
which they have been so enamoured,
have nothing Divine or Supernatu-
ral in them. I say, for such Reasons,
I was desirous that this Discourse
should be publique. The Author at
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to the Reader.

which first was averſe to it, but at length he
gave it me to do with it what I plea-
ſed: And in gratitude for the kind-
neſs, I think fit to do him that right,
to give this account of the occaſion
of its coming abroad.

And to this I am to add, That
though this Diſcourſe was never
written till after it had been pub-
lickly delivered; yet for the ſatisfa-
ction of thoſe that miſtook it, I
aſſure them from the Author, That
here is all that was ſpoken, and for
the moſt part the ſame order and
words, only the Inferences, and ſome
other things up and down are added,
but nothing that he knows omitted.
I ſhal preſume to add no more, but now
remit the Reader to the Book it ſelf.

William Allen.



T O

A Dear Friend.

My Friend,



Believe I needed not heretofore have taken much pains to assure you of the *sincerity* of my *Friendship*; But after so long an absence, and a distance so great; it may, perhaps, be now seasonable to say, That I have still the *same dearnefs* for you. How I might express *this* in some instance of *real kindness*, hath been long my care; and I have often meditated to send you something, that might serve you in your *eternal-interests*; of *these* I thought *most*, because they are your *chiefest*, and I know you
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To a Dear Friend.

esteem them most: And I am in no capacity of contributing to your other concerns. But hitherto, notwithstanding those thoughts, my affection hath produced nothing but *desires* and *intentions*. I was lately considering, with trouble, how much I had been defeated in those purposes, and how frequently and unhappily diverted; *when* it came into my mind, that there was a little Discourse of mine gone newly to the Press, which I fancied you would not dislike, and remembring that the Subject was *The Way of Happynesse*. which I as passionately desire for you as for my self, It pleased me with the thoughts of putting it into your hands, and so in that way, of conveying my self to you; which that I might do, with some *special* note of a more than ordinary regard, I thought of *this* course of particular recommendation and direction. The Book contains things that you have sometimes heard me Discourse, and I am very desirous that you should thoroughly digest, and retain those Notes, because I be-

To a Dear Friend.

lieve they will steed you: nor can I
doubt, but that you will endeavour to
do so, because they are the thoughts
and counsels of

Your most constant Friend,

J. G.

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THE
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TO
HAPPINESSE.

Luke XII. XXIV. *Verse.*

*Strive to enter in at the straight Gate :
For many, I say unto you, shall seek
to enter in, and shall not be able.*

INTRODUCTION.



WHEN I consider the
goodnesse of God ; and
the merits of his Son,
our Saviour ; and the
Influences of the Holy
Spirit ; and all the ad-
vantages of the Gospel ; The certain-
ty of its Principles, the reasonableness
of

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of its duties, the *greatness* of its ends, the *suitableness* of its means, the *Glory* of its Rewards, and the *Terrour* of its punishments ; I say, when I consider *these*, and then look upon *Man* as a *reasonable* Creature, apprehensive of *Duty*, and *interest*, and apt to be moved by *hopes* and *fears* ; I cannot but wonder, and be astonisht to think, that notwithstanding *all this*, the far greater part of men should finally miscarry, and be undone. 'Tis possible *some* such *Considerations* might be the occasion of the *Question* propounded to our Saviour in the verse immediately foregoing the Text ——— *Lord, are there Few that be saved ?* God is *Love*, and all the Creatures are *His*, and man a noble sort ; *He* is the *Lover* of *Men*, and *Thou* art the *Redeemer* of *Men* ; And though *Man* hath *offended*, yet God is propense to *pardon*, and in *Thee* he is reconciled ; He is desirous of our happiness, and *Thou* art come into the world to offer, and promote it ; and the *Holy Ghost* is *powerful* and *ready* to assist

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assist our indeavours ; We were made for happinesse, and we seek it ; And ——— Lord, are there Few that be saved? The Text is Christ's return to the Question, *Strive to enter in at the straight Gate ; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter, and shal not be able.* In which words we have three things.

(I) An Answer imply'd: *Straight is the Gate.*

(II) A duty exprest, *Strive to enter.*

(III) A Consideration to ingage our greater care and diligence in the Duty ; *For many will seek to enter, and shal not be able.*

By the Gate we may understand the entrance, and all the way of Happiness, and that is, *Religion* ; By the straightness of it, the *Difficulties* we are to encounter ; By striving, earnest and sincere endeavour : By seeking, an imperfect striving ; And from the words thus briefly explain'd, These Propositions offer themselves to our Consideration.

I. There are many and great difficulties

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cles in Religion. The Gate is straight.

II. The Difficulties may be overcome by striving. Strive to enter.

III. There is a sort of striving that will not procure an entrance. For many will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.

C H A P. I.

There are great Difficulties in Religion. Religion is not hard to be understood. The Difficulties arise (1) from the Depravities of our Natures, (2) from the Influences of the senses, (3) from the disorder of our passion, (4) from the power of Custom, (5) from evil example, and (6) from worldly interests and engagements.

S E C T. I.

I *Begin with the First in order, viz. That there are many and great difficulties in Religion; And to what I have to*

to say about it, I premise this negative Consideration, That the *Difficulties* of Religion do not lye in the *Understanding*. Religion is a plain thing, and easie to be understood. 'Tis no deep subtilty, or high-strain'd notion; 'tis no gilded phancy, or elaborate exercise of the brain; 'Tis not plac'd in the clouds of Imagination, nor wrapt up in mystical cloathing; But 'tis obvious and familiar, easie and intelligible; First preach'd by *Fishermen*, and *Mechanicks*, without pomp of speech, or height of speculation; addrest to *Babes* and *Plbeian* heads; and intended to govern the *wills* of the *bonest*, and *sincere*; and not to exercise the *Wits* of the *notional*, and *curious*. So that we need not mount the *wings* of the *wind* to fetch Religion from the *stars*; nor go down to the *deep* to fetch it up from thence; For 'tis *with us*, and *before us*, as open as the *day*, and as familiar as the *light*. The great *Precepts* of the Gospel are clothed in *Sun-beams*, and are as visible to the *common eye*, as to the *Eagle* upon

upon the highest perch. 'Tis no piece of wit or subtilty to be a *Christian*, nor will it require much study, or learned retirement to *understand* the Religion we must practise. That which was to be known of God, was manifest to the very Heathen, *Rom. i. xix. The Law is light*, saith *Solomon*, *Prov. vi. xii.* And 'tis not only a single passing glance on the eye; but 'tis put into the heart, and the promise is, that we shall all know him, from the greatest to the least. Our duty is set up in open places, and shone upon by a clear beam; 'Twas written of old upon the plain Tables of *Habakkuk*, *Hab. ii. ii.* So that the running eye might see and read: And the Religion of the *H. Jesus*, like himself, came into the world with rays about its head.

Religion, I say, is clear, and plain, and what is not so, may concern the Theatre, or the Schools; may entertain mens wits, and serve the interest of disputes; But 'tis nothing to Religion, 'tis nothing to the interest of mens souls.

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Religion was once a *Mystery*, but the *Mystery* is *revealed*; and those things that we yet count *Mysteries*, are plain-ly enough discover'd as to their be-*ing* such as we believe them, though we cannot understand the *manner how*; and 'tis no part of *Religion* to *inquire* into that, but rather *It* enjoins us meekly to acquiesce in the plain declarations of Faith without *bold* scrutiny into *hidden things*. In short then I say; the *difficulties* of *Religion* are not in the *Understanding*; *In prompto & Facili est eternitas*, said the Father; The affairs of eternity depend on things *easy* and *Familiar*. And I premise this to prevent dangerous mistakes.

But though Religion be so facile, and plain a thing to be understood, yet the way to *Heaven* is no *broad* or *easy* path; The *Gate* is *straight* enough for all that; and I now come to shew what are the *real difficulties* of *Religion*, and whence they arise.

SECT.

S E C T. II.

ONe great Difficulty ariseth from the *depravity* of our *natures*. The Scripture intimates, *That we are conceived in sin*, Psalm lv. 5. *Trangressors from the womb*, Isaiah, xlvi. 8. and *Children of wrath*, Ephes. ii. 3. And we find by *experience* that we bring *vile* inclinations into the world with us. *Some are naturally* cruel, and injurious; proud and imperious; lustful, and revengeful: *Others*, Covetous, and unjust; humoursome, and discontented; treacherous, and false. And there is scarce an instance of *habitual* vice, or villany, but some or other are addicted to it by their *particular make and natures*: I say, their *natures*, for certainly it is not true what some affirm (to serve their opinions) in contradiction to experience: That *vices are not in mens natural propensions: but instill'd by corrupt education, evil customs and examples*: For we see that those whose edu-

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education hath been the same, do yet differ extreamly from each other in their *inclinations*; And some, whose breeding hath been *careless* and loose, who have seen almost nothing else but examples of *vice*; and been instructed in little, besides the arts of *Vanity* and *pleasure*; I say, there are *such* who notwithstanding these their *unhappy* circumstances, discover none of those *vile* inclinations, and propensions, that are in others whose *education* hath been very *strict* and *advantageous*. This I think is enough to shew that many of our evil habits are from *nature*, and not from *custom* only.

And yet I cannot say that *Humane Nature* is so debauched, that every man is inclin'd to every evil by it: For there are *those*, who by their tempers are *averse* to some kind of vices, and *naturally* disposed to the contrary virtues; some by their *constitutions* are inclined to hate *Cruelty*, *Covetousness*, *lying*, *impudence*, and *injustice*, and are by temper *merciful*, *liberal*, *wise*, *true*

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true, and just. There are kinds of vices which our natures almost universally rise against, as many *bestialities*, and some horrid *Cruelties*; And all men, except *Monsters* in humane form, are disposed to some vertues, such as *Love* to *Children*, and *kindness* to *friends*, and *Benefactors*. All this I must confess and say, because *experience* constrains me; and I do not know why *Systematick notions* should sway more then that.

But notwithstanding these last concessions, 'tis evident enough that our natures are much *vitiated*, and *depraved*; and this makes our businesse in the way of Religion, *difficult*. For our work is, to *cleanse* our *Natures*, and to *destroy* those *evil Inclinations*, to *crucifie* the *old man*. Rom. vi. vi. and to *purge* out the *old leaven*, 1 Cor. v. vii. This is Religion, and the way of happinesse, wick must needs be very *difficult* and *uneasie*. For the vices of *Inclination* are very *dear*, and *grateful* to us; They are our *right hands*, and
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our *right eyes*, and esteemed as *our selves*: So that to *cut off*, and *pluck out these*, and to bid defiance to, and wage war against our selves; to destroy the first-born of our natures, and to lop off our own limbs; This cannot but be very *irksome* and *displeasing* employment, and this is one chief business, and a considerable thing that makes *Religion difficult*.

SECT. III.

II. **A** Nother *difficulty* ariseth from the *Influence* of the *Senses*. We are creatures of *sense*, and sensible things do most powerfully move us; we are born *Children*, and live at first the *life* of *beasts*. That Age receives deep impressions, and those are made by the *senses*, whose interest grows strong, and established in us before we come to the *use* of *reason*, and after we have arrived to the exercise of *that*, sensible objects still possess our affections, & sway our wills, and fill our Imaginations,

ons, and influence our Understandings; so that we love, and hate; we desire and choose, we phancy, and we discourse according to those impressions; And hence it is that we are enamour'd of trifles, and fly from our happiness: and pursue Vexation, and embrace misery; and imagine perversly, and reason childishly: For the influence of the body, and its senses are the chief Fountains of sin, and Folly and Temptation: Upon which accounts it was that the Platonical Philosophers declaim'd so earnestly against the body, and ascrib'd all evil, and mischief to it, calling *vice* *carnea* *pestes*, *corporea pestes*, *material evils*, and *bodily plagues*. And the Apostle that understood it better, calls sin by the name of *Flesh*, v Gal. xvii. *Works of the flesh*, Gal v. xix. *Law of the Members*, Rom. vii. xxiii. and cries out upon the *body of this death* Rom. vii. xxiv.

And now this is our natural condition, a state subject to the prevalent influences of sense, &c. so sin, and temptation by

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by them; And 'tis our *work* in Religion to mortifie the body, viii. Rom. xiii. and to cease from making provision for the flesh, xiii. Rom. xiv. and from fulfilling the lusts thereof, v. Gal. xiv. To render our selves dead to the prevalent life of sense, and sin, Rom. vi. 8. and 11. v. and to arise to a new life, Rom. vi. 4. The life of righteousness, and Faith, Hab. ii. 4. A Life that hath other Principles, and other pleasures; other objects, and other ends, and such as neither eye hath seen, nor ear heard, nor any of the senses perceived. Yea this is a Life that is exercised in contradiction to the judgements of sense. Its joy, is Tribulation, Jam. I. 2. It's Glory, reproaches, 2 Pet. iv. 14. It's height, is lownesse, Luke xiv. 11. It's greatness, in being meanest, Mat. xx. 27. And it's riches in having nothing 2 Cor. vi. 10. To such a life as this Religion is to raise us; and it must needs be difficult to make us, who are so much Brutes, to be so much Angels; us who seem to live by no thing else but sense, to live

live by *nothing less*; This with a witness is an *hard and uneasy* work, and another *difficulty* in Religion.

S E C T. IV.

(III.) **A** Third proceeds from the natural disorder, and rage of our passions. Our Corrupt natures are like the *troubled Sea*, Isa. Ivii. 20. And our passions are the *waves* of that Ocean, that tumble and swell, and keep a mighty noise; they dash against the rocks, and break one against another; and our peace, and happiness is shipwreckt by them. Our passions make us miserable. We are sometimes *disturb'd* by their numbers, and confounded by their disorders, and torn to pieces by their violence; mounted to the clouds by ambition, and thrown down to the deep by despair: scorcht by the flames of Lust, and overwhelm'd by the waters of unstable desire: Passions fight one against another, and all against reason: they prevail over the mind, and have

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usurps the Government of our Actions, and involve us in continual guilt and misery. This is the natural state of man; and our work in the way of Religion, is to restrain this violence, and to rectifie these disorders, and to reduce those rebellious powers under the Empire, and Government of the mind, their Sovereign. And so to regain the divine image, which consists much in the order of our faculties; and the subjection of the Brutish, to the reasonable powers. This, I say, Religion aims at, to raise us to the perfection of our natures, by mortifying those members, Col. iii. 5. our unruly passions & desires; and crucifying the flesh with its affections, and lusts, Gal. v. 24. And thereby to make us humble in Prosperity, quiet in Adversity; meek under provocations, steady amidst temptations; modest in our desires, temperate in our enjoyments; constant to our resolutions, and contented in all conditions. Here is our great business, and our work is this: and certainly 'tis no easie thing to bring

order out of a *Chaos*, and to speak a *tempest* into a *calm*; to resist a *torrent*, and to stop and turn the *tyde*; to subdue a *rebellious* rabble, and to change them from *tyrannical* Masters, to *modest* and *obedient* servants; These, no doubt, are works of *difficulty* enough, and these must be our employment in the way of *Religion*; and on this score also, the *Gate is straight*.

SECT. V.

(IV.) OUR work in Religion is yet more *difficult*, upon the account of *Custom*, to which we are subject, and by which we are swayed much. This is vulgarly said to be another nature, and the Apostle calls it by that name, 1 Cor. xi. 14. *Doth not nature it self teach you, that if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him?* By the word *Nature*, the best Interpreters say onely *Custom* is meant; since long hair is not declared *shameful* by the Law, and Light of Nature,
taken

taken in it's chief and properest sense: For then it had never been permitted to the *Nazarites*: But the *contrary custom*, in the Nations that used it not, made it seem *shameful* and *indecent*. There are other places in Scripture, and antient Authors, wherein *Nature* is put for *Custom*: But I must not insist on *this*; the thing I am about is, That *custom* is very *powerfull*; and as it makes a kind of *Nature*, so, many times, it *masters* and *subdues* it. Wild creatures are hereby made gentle and familiar; and those that naturally are tame enough, are made to degenerate into wildness by it.

And now besides the *original* depravities of our natures, we have *contracted* many *vitious habits* by *corrupt* and *evil* usages; which we were drawn into at first by pleasure, and vanity in our young and inconsiderate years, while we were led by the directions of sense: *These*, by *frequent* acts, grow at last into *habits*, which though in their beginning they were *tender* as a plant,

and easie to have been crusht or blasted; yet *time* and *use* hardens them into the *firmness* of an *Ooak*, that braves the weather, and can endure the stroak of the *Axe*, and a strong arm.

Now to destroy and root up these obstinate *customary* evils, is another part of our work. And Religion teacheth us to *put off concerning the old conversation the old man*, Ephes. iv. 22. and to receive *new impressions and inclinations*; to be renewed in the *spirit of our minds*, v. 23. and to *put on the new man*, v. 24. To make *us new hearts*, Ezek. xviii. 31. and to *walk in newness of life*, Rom. vi. 4. *This* we are to do, and this we may wel suppose to be *hard work*; the Scripture compares it to the *changing the skin of the Ethiopian*, and the *spots of the Leopard*, Jer. xiii. 23. and elsewhere. *How can they do good, that are accustomed to do evil?* Jer. xiii. 23. 'Tis *hard*, no doubt; and this is another *difficulty in Religion*.

(V.) The power that *Example* hath

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hath over us, makes the way of Religion difficult. Example is more prevalent than precept; for man is a creature given much to imitation, and we are very apt to follow what we see others do, rather than what we ought to do our selves.

And now the Apostle hath told us, That the whole World lies in wickedness, 1 Joh. v. 19. and we sadly find it: we cannot look out of doors, but we see vanity and folly, sensuality, and forgetfulness of God; Pride and Covetousness, Injustice and Intemperance, and all other kinds of evils: These we meet with every where, in publick companies, and private conversations, in the high wayes, and in the corners of the streets.

The sum is, Example is very powerful, and examples of Vice are alwayes in our eyes; we are apt to be reconciled to that which every one doth, & to do like it; we love the trodden path, and care not to walk in the way which is gone in but by a few.

This is our *condition*, & our *work* in *Religion* is, to *overcome* the strong *biass* of corrupt *example*; to *strive* against the *stream*, to learn to be *good*, though *few* are *so*, and not to follow a *multitude* to do *evil*, *Exod. xxiii. 2.* This is our *business*; and this is very *difficult*.

S E C T VI.

(VI) **T**HE last *difficulty* I shall mention, ariseth from *Worldly interest* and *engagements*. We have many *necessities* to serve, both in our *Persons*, and our *Families*. Nature excluded us *naked* into the *World*, without *cloathing* for *warmth*, or *armture* for *defence*; *food* is not provided to our hands, as it is for the *Beasts*, nor do our *houses* grow for our *habitation*, and comfortable *abode*. Nothing is prepared for our use without our *industry*, and *endeavours*. So that by the *necessity* of this *state*, we are engaged in *worldly affairs*: These *Nature* requires us to mind, and
Religion

Religion permits it ; And nothing can be done without our *care* ; and *care* would be very *troublesome*, if there were not some *love* to the *objects* we exercise our cares upon : Hence it is, that *some cares* about the things of *this* world, and *love* to them, is allowed us ; and we are commanded to continue in the *Calling* wherein God hath set us, 1 Cor. vii. 20. and are warned that we be not *sloathfull* in *businessse*, Rom. xii. 11. We may take *some delight* also in the *Creatures* that God gives us, and *love* them in their *degree* : For the *Animal* life may have its *moderate gratifications* ; God made all things, that they might enjoy their *Being*.

And now, notwithstanding all *this*, Religion commands us to *set our affections upon things above*, Col. iii. 2. not to *love the World*, 1 Joh. ii. 15. to be *carefull for nothing*, Phil. iv. 6. to take *no thought for tomorrow*, Mat. vi. 34. The meaning of which expressions is, That we should love God and heavenly things in the *chief and first place* ; and

avoid the *immoderate* degree of *Worldly* love and cares. This is our *duty*; and 'tis very *difficult*: For by reason of the *hurry* of *business*, and those *passions* that *earthly* engagements excite; we *consider* not things as we should, and so, many times, perceive not the *bounds* of our *permissions*, and the *beginnings* of our *restraints*; where the *allowed* measure *ends*, and the *forbidden* degree *commenceth*: what is the difference between that *care* that is a *duty*, and that which is a *sin*; *Providence* and *Caring*; and between that *love* of the *World* which is *necessary* and *lawfull*, and that which is *extravagant* and *inordinate*; I say, by reason of the *hurry* we are in, amidst *business* and *worldly* delights, we many times *perceive* not our *bounds*, and so slide easily into *earthly-mindednesse* and *anxiety*. And it is hard for us, who are engaged so much in the *World*, and who need it so much, who converse so much with it, and about it, and whose time and endeavors are so un-

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voidably taken up by it; I say, 'tis hard for us, in such circumstances, to be crucified to the World, Gal. vi. 14. and to all inordinate affections to it; to live above it, and to settle our chief delights and cares on things at great distance from us, which are unsuitable to our corrupt appetites, and contrary to the most relishing enjoyments of flesh; which sense never saw nor felt, and which the imagination it self could never grasp. This, no doubt, is hard exercise, and this must be done in the way of Religion; and on this account also, it is very difficult.

Thus of the FIRST Proposition, That there are great Difficulties in Religion. I come now to the Second.

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CHAP.

CHAP. II.

That the Difficulties may be overcome. The Instruments whereby it may be done, viz. Faith, Prayer, and active endeavour. They are particularly consider'd. The Method of endeavour proposed in plain and practicable Rules. Some Qualifications of those Rules.

SECT. I.

(11) **T**HAT those Difficulties may be overcome by striving; which imports both the *Encouragement*, and the *Means*; That **THEY MAY BE VANQUISHT**; and **HOW**.

(1.) That the Difficulties may be subdued, is clearly enough implied in the

the Precept; we should not have been commanded to *strive*, if it had been *impossible* to overcome. God doth not put his Creatures upon *fruitless* undertakings: He never requires us to do any thing in order to *that*, which is not to be *attained*. Therefore when he was resolved not to be intreated for that stubborn and rebellious Nation, He would not have the Prophet pray for them, *Jer. vii. 16. Pray not for this people, for I will not hear thee.* He would not be *petitioned* for *that*, which he was determined not to *grant*. He puts not his Creatures upon any *vain* expectations, and endeavours; nor would he have them deceive themselves, by fond dependence. When one made this profession to our Saviour, *Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.* Christ tells him, that he must expect from him no worldly honours, or preferments; no power or sensual pleasure, no, not so much as the ordinary accommodations of Life. *The Foxes have Holes, & the Birds*

*of the Air have Nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head, Luke ix. 5.8. He would not have the man, that likely might look for these, upon the opinion of his being the *Messias*, in the Jewish sense, one that should at last, whatever the meanness of his condition was at present, appear as a *Mighty and Triumphant temporal Monarch*; I say, our Saviour would not have the Man follow Him for that, which he had not to bestow upon him. Since then that he who would not put us upon *fruitless labours*, hath commanded us to *strive to enter*: 'tis evident, that an entrance may be procured into the gate by *striving*, and that the *difficulties* may be overcome.*

SECT. II.

THE next thing in my method is to shew, *How*; The *maner* is implied in the Text: and *express* in the *Proposition*, viz. By *striving*; and by *this*, is meant, a *resolute use* of those means that

that are the Instruments of happiness. They are three, Faith, Prayer, and active Endeavour.

(1.) Faith is a *chief* Instrument, for the overcoming the Difficulties, I have mentioned. And Faith in the general, is the *belief of a Testimony*: Divine Faith the belief of a *Divine Testimony*; and the chief things to be believed, as encouragements and means for a victory over the Difficulties in Religion, are these; That God is reconciled to us by his Son; That he will assist our weak endeavours by the Aids of his Spirit; that he will reward us, if we strive as we ought, with immortal Happiness, in a world of endless Glory.

By our belief of Gods being reconciled, we are secured from those fears, that might discourage our approaches, and endeavors, upon the account of his purity & Justice. By the faith of his assistance, all the objections against our strivings, that arise from the greatness of the difficulties, & the disproportionate smallness of our strength, are answered. And from

our believing *eternal rewards* in another world, we have a mighty *motive* to engage our outmost diligence, to contest with all difficulties that would keep us from it.

What *satisfaction* is there, saith the believer, in the *gratification* of my *corrupt inclinations* and *senses*, in comparison with *that* which ariseth from the *favour* of God, and an *interest* in his Son? What difficulties in my *Duty*, too great for *Divine Aids*? What *pains* are we to undergo in the *narrow and difficult* way, that the *glory* which is at the end of it, will not *compensate*? What is it to *deny* a *base inclination* that will undo me; in *obedience* to Him that *made*, and *redeemed* me; and to *despise* the little things of *present sense*, for the hope of *everlasting enjoyments*; *Trifling pleasure*, for *Hallelujahs*? What were it for me to *set vigorously* upon those *Passions*, that degrade my noble nature, and make me a *slave*, and a *beast*, & will make me *more vile*, & *more miserable*; when the *Spirit* of the most

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High is at my *right* hand to aſſiſt me ? Why ſhould my noble Faculties, that were deſigned for glorious ends, be led into infamous practices by *baſe uſages*, and *diſhonourable Cuſtoms* ? What is the *example* of a *wicked ſensual wretched* world, to that of the *Holy Jeſus* ; and all the *Army of Prophets, Apoſtles and Martyrs* ? What is there in the *World*, that it ſhould be *loved* more than *God* ? and what is the *fleſh*, that it ſhould have *more* of our *time*, and *care*, than the great intereſts of our Souls.

Such are the *Conſiderations* of a mind, that *Faith* hath awakened ; and by them it is prepared for *vigorous ſtriving*. So that *Faith* is the *Spring* of all ; and *neceſſary* to the other two *inſtruments* of our *Happineſs*. Beſides which, it is *acceptable* to God, in it ſelf, and ſo diſpoſeth us for his *gracious helps*, by which we are enabled to overcome the *Difficulties* of our way. While a man conſiders the *Difficulties* only, and weighs them againſt his own *ſtrength*, Let him ſuppoſe the *Liberty* of his *will* to be
what

what he pleaſeth, yet while 'tis under ſuch diſadvantages, *that* will ſignifie very little; and he that ſees no further, ſits down in diſcouragement; But when the mind is fortified with the firm belief of *divine help*, he attempts then with a *noble vigour*, which cannot miſcarry, if it do not *cool and faint*. For *he that endures to the end ſhal be ſaved*, Mat. xxiv. 13. Thus *Faith* ſets the other Instruments of Happineſſe on work, and therefore 'tis deſervedly reckoned as the *fiſt*, & 'tis *that* which muſt *always* accompany the *exerciſes* of Religion, and give them *life and motion*.

S E C T. II.

(II) **P**ayer is another *means*, we muſt uſe, in order to our *overcoming* the *Difficulties* of the way. Our own, meer, natural *ſtrength* is *weakneſs*; and without *ſupernatural* helps thoſe *Difficulties* are not to be ſurmounted. *Theſe Aids* then are *neceſſary*, and God is ready to beſtow them.

them on us ; For *He would have all men to be saved, and to come to the Knowledge of the Truth*, i Tim. ii. 4. But for these things he will be sought unto. And 'tis very just, and fit that we should address our selves to him by Prayer, to acknowledge our own insufficiency, and dependence on him for the mercies we expect : and thereby to own Him for the giver of every good, and perfect gift ; and to instruct our selves how his favours are to be received and used, viz. with reverence and thanksgiving : This I say 'tis highly fit that we should do ; and the doing it prepares us for his blessings : and he fails not to bestow them on those that are prepared by Faith, and Prayer ; For he giveth liberally and upbraids not : And our Prayers are required, not as if they could move his will, which is always graciously inclined to our happiness ; But as it's that tribute which we owe our Maker, and Benefactor : and that without which, 'tis not so fit he should bestow his particular favours

vours on us. For 'tis by no means becoming the Divine Majesty, to vouchsafe the *specialties* of his *Grace*, and *goodness* to those, that are not *sensible* that They *want* them; and are not *humbled* to a due apprehension of their *weakness*, and dependence. But for such as are *so*, and express their humble desires in the *Ardours of Holy Prayer*, God never *denies* them the *assurances* of his *Spirit*: For if ye being evil (saith our Saviour) know how to give good gifts unto your Children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to those that ask Him? Mat. vii. 11.

And these *Divine Helps* obtain'd by *Faith* and *Prayer*, and join'd with our *active constant endeavour*, will not fail to enable us to overcome the *difficulties*, and to procure us an entrance at the *straight gate*. And so I come to the *Third Instrument* of our *Happiness*, and means that we must use, implied in *striving*, viz.

S E C T.

SECT. III.

(III.) **A**ctive endeavour, in which *Repentance* and the *fruits* of it are implied; Both *Faith* and *Prayer* are in order to *this*; and without it they can neither of them turn to account. For *Faith without Works is dead*, Jam. ii. 20. and *Prayer without endeavours, fruitless*; yea indeed, in the Divine estimate it is *none at all*: 'Tis *bodily exercise*; no *Prayer*. For when we invoke *Gods help*, we *desire* it, that we may *use* it; *Divine grace is not a Treasure to lay up by us, but an instrument to work with*; And when we pray that God would *assist* us in our *endeavours*, & *endeavour not at all*, we *mock* God, and *trifle* with him in our *Prayers*: I say then, That *endeavour* is *necessary*, and necessary in a degree so eminent, that *this* is alwayes included in *Faith* when 'tis taken in the *biggest*, and noblest *evangelicall sense*, viz. for the *Faith* which *justifies* and *saves*; for

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for that comprehends *all* those endeavours, and their fruits, whereby we are made happy.

We must not expect that God should do *all* (*exclusively*) in the work of our Salvation. He doth *his* part, and we must do *ours* ; (though we do *that*, by his help too) He that made *us* without our selves, will not save *us* without our selves, said the Father. We are commanded to seek, *Mat. vii. 7. To Run, 1 Cor. ix. 24. To fight, 1 Tim. vi. 12. To give diligence, 2 Pet. i. 10 These all import action, and endeavours.* And that endeavour must not be only a faint purpose, or formal service ; but it must be employed in the highest degree of care and diligence. The kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, *Mat. xi. 12.* and this violence must not be used in an heat and sudden fit only that cools, and dies, & contents it self with having been warm for a time : But it must be a steady, and constant course of activity, a continuall striving to overcome the remaining difficulties of the way.

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We must endeavour then, vigorously,
and constantly: and in that, (after our
Faith is strengthened by deep considera-
tion, and divine assistance implored by
ardent Prayer) our course is,

(1.) To abstain from all the outward
actions of SIN, and to perform the ex-
ternal acts of the contrary virtues. To
cease to do evil, 1sa i. 16. is the first
step. When the Publicans askt John
the Baptist, Luk. 3 12. what they shold
do; His direction was, That they
should not exact, verl. 13. and to the
Souldiers asking the same question, he
answers, Do violence to no man, verl.
14. These were the sins of their parti-
cular Professions, which were to be
quitted, before any thing could be
done higher. We have ordinarily more
power over our actions, than our habits,
and therefore we should begin here,
and resolve deeply, by divine help, to
cut off those supplies that feed vicious
inclinations: For wicked habits are
maintain'd by actions of wickedness:
when they cease, the inclinations grow
more

more faint, and weak: And when we are come but *thus far*, to have confined our *lusts*, we shal be encouraged to proceed to destroy them. 'Tis said, There is no great distance between a *Princes Prison* and his *Grave*: The saying is most true in the Case of *Tyrants*, and *Usurpers*: and the *habits* of sin are *both*: when they are *restrain'd*, they are not far from being *destroyed*, if we imploy our endeavours, and the divine aids, as we ought.

This then I say, must be done *First*, and the *other* part of the advice must be taken with it, *viz.* we must practise the *outward actions* of the contrary *vertues*. We must do well, when we cease to do evil. When we turn from darkness, it must be to light, *Acts* 26. 18. Not from one kind of darkness to another. When we cease to oppress, we must be *charitable*: when we leave to tyrannize over our *inferiours*, we must be *kind*, and *helpful* to them. When we forbear to slander, we must *speak* all the good we can of our Neighbour.

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The *outward* actions of vertue are in our power; and 'tis somewhat to come so far as *this*: What is *more*, viz. The *inward love and delight in goodnesse*, will succeed in time, if we persevere. 'Tis not safe for us to propose to our selves the greatest heights at first; if we do, we are discouraged, and fall back: God accepts even of that *little*, if it be in order to *more*. He despiseth not the day of smal things, *Zeck. iv. 10.* if thou dost well, shalt thou not be accepted? Christ loved the young man who had kept the *external* part of the *Commandments*, Mark x. 21. If he had had the courage to have proceeded; what he had done, would have steaded him much. The *inward love of vertue and holinesse* is promoted by the *outward* exercise of them, and hereby the *contrary* evils are both pined, and thrust out.

Thus of the *First* thing that endeavour implies; upon this must follow next,

(II.) *An attempt upon evill habits, viz. Those that have been superinduced*
on

on us by *carelessness* & *temptation* bad *customs*, and *evil company*. Every *victory* is a *means* to another; we grow *stronger*, and the *enemy* weaker by it. To have overcome the *outward* acts of sin, is a *beginning* in our *spiritual* warfare; but our *chief* enemies are the *habits*; *these* must be attempted also, but with *prudence*; wild *beasts* are not to be dealt with by *main strength*; Art and *stratagem* must be used in this war: and 'tis *good policy*, I think here to fight the *least* powerful foes *first*; the *contracted* habits, before we fall on the *inbred* *natural* inclinations. While our forces are weak, 'tis dangerous setting upon the strongest holds, *viz.* the vices of *complexion*, which are woven into our *very* *natures*. If a man apply all his *force* where he hath not *resolutions* enough to go through with what he undertakes, he receives a *foyl*, and 'tis odds but he sits down, and faints. *Prudence* therefore is to be used, where we distrust our strength: Fall upon sin then, where 'tis *weakest*, where it hath
least

least of nature, and least of temptation, and where we have arguments from reputation, and worldly interests, wherewith to war against it. If we prevail, we are heartned by the success: Our Faith and resolution will grow stronger by this experience, when we have triumpht over the sins of evil custom, example, and sensual indulgence.

And when that is done, we must remember, that 'tis not enough that those *habits* are thrust out; others must be planted in their room: when the soyl is prepared, the seed must be sown; and the seeds of vertuous *habits*, are the actions of vertue. These I recommended under the last head, and shal say more of the introducing of *habits*, under one that follows on purpose.

(III.) The next advance in our endeavours, is, *In the strength of God, and in the Name of his Son, to assault the greater Devils, and to strive to cast out them*; I mean the sins of Complexion, and particular Nature. This is a

great work, and will require *strong Faith*, and *many Prayers*, and *much time*, and *great watchfulnesse*, and *invincible resolution*: Imploy these *heartily*; and though thou now and then mayst receive a *foyl*, yet give not off so, but rise again in the strength of *G O D*, implore *new aid*, and fortifie thy self with *more considerations*, and *deeper resolves*; and *then* renew the *Combat* upon the *encouragement* of *Divine assistance*, and *Christs merits* and *intercession*, and the *promise* that *sin shall not have dominion over us*, Rom. vi. 14.

Remember, that this is the *great work*, and the *biggest difficulty*; if this be not overcome, all our *other labour* hath been in *vain*, and will be *lost*. If this *root* remain, it will still bear *poysinous fruit*, which will be *matter for temptation*: and occasion of *continual falling*; and we shal be in danger of being reconciled again to our *old sins*, and to *undo all*; and so our *latter end* will be *worse then our beginning*, 2 Pet. 11. 20. Or, at least, though we stand at a *stay*,

stay, and satisfie our selves with *that* ; yet though we are *contented*, our condition is not *safe*.

If we will endeavour to any purpose of *duty*, or *security*, we must proceed stil after our *lesser conquests*, till the *sins* of *complexion* are laid dead at our feet. He that is born of *God*, sinneth not, and he cannot sin, 1 *Joh. iii. 9*. Till we come to *this*, we are but *strugling* in the *birth*.

Such a *perfection* as is *mortifying* of *vitious temper*, is I hope *attainable*, and 'tis no doubt that which *Religion* aims at ; and though it be a *difficult heighe*, yet we must not sit down this side : At least we must be alwayes pressing on to this Mark : if Providence cut off our days before we have arrived to it, we may expect acceptance of the *sincerity* of our endeavours, upon the account of the *merits* of our Saviour : For he hath procured favour for those *sincere* Believers, and Endeavourers, whose Day is done, before their Work is compleated ; *this* I mean, of subduing the

darling sins of their particular *Natures*.

But then if we *rest*, and please our selves with the *little Victories* and attainments, and let these our *great enemies* quietly alone, 'tis an argument our *endeavours* are not *sincere*, but much short of that *striving*, which will procure an *entrance* into the *straight gate*. The next thing (and 'tis the last I shall mention) which is implied in *striving*, is,

(IV.) *To furnish our selves, through Divine Grace, with the habits and inclinations of Holiness and Vertue.* For *Goodness* to become a kind of *Nature* to the Soul, is *height* indeed; but such a one as may be reacht: the new *Nature*, and new *Creature*, Gal. vi. 15. are not meer *Names*.

We have observ'd that some men are of a *Natural Generosity, veracity, and Sweetness*; and they cannot act contrary to these *Native Vertues* without a mighty *Violence*: why now should not the *New Nature* be as *powerfull* as the

the Old? And why may not the Spirit of God, working by an active Faith and endeavour, fix *habits* and *inclinations* on the Soul, as prevalent as *those*? No doubt, it may; and doth, upon the Diviner Souls: For whom to do a *wicked*, or *unworthy action*, 'twould be as *violent*, and *unnatural* as for the *meek* and *compassionate* temper to *butcher* the *innocent*; or for him, that is *naturally just*, to *oppress* and make a *prey* of the *Fatherless* and the *Widow*: I say, such a *degree of perfection* as this, should be aim'd at, *Heb. vi. 1.* and we should not sit down, and slacken our endeavours on *this* side it.

In order to our arriving at the *happy pitch*, we are to use frequent *meditation* on the *excellency* and *pleasure* of *Vertue* and *Religion*; and *earnest prayer* for the *Grace* of God; and *diligent attendance* upon the *publique worship*; and *pious company* and *converses*: For this great *design*, these helps are requisite, and if we exercise our selves in them, as we ought, they will fire

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our Souls with the *love* of God, and Goodnesse; and so at last, *all* Christian *Virtues* will become as *natural* to us, as *sin* was before. And to *one*, that is so *prepared*, the *Gate* of *Happinesse* will be *open*, and of *ease* entrance, the *difficulties* are *overcome*, and from henceforth the *way* is *pleasant* and *plain* before him, *Prov. iii. 17.*

Thus I have shewn you, that the *formidable difficulties* may be *overcome*, and I have told you *How*: 'tis a *plain course* I have directed, that will not *puzzle* your *understandings* with *needless viceties*, nor *distract* your *memories* with *multitudes*. Walk in this way, and do it *constantly*, with *vigour* and *alacrity*; and there is no fear, but in the *strength* of God, through the *merits* and *mediation* of his Son, you will *overcome*, and at last, *enter*.

S E C T. I V.

I Had now done with this *general* Head, but that 'tis necessary to note *three* things here. (1.) Those

(1.) Those *Instruments* of our happiness which we must use in *striving*, viz. *Faith*, *Prayer*, and *active Endeavour*, *must all of them be employed*. Not any *one* singly, will do the great work; nor can the *others*, if *any one*, be wanting. If we *believe*, and *do not pray*; or *pray*, and *do not endeavour*: or *endeavour* without *those*, the *Difficulties* will remain, and 'twill be impossible for us to *enter*.

(2.) *We must be diligent in our course*: If we do not exercise *Faith vigorously*, and *Pray heartily*, and *endeavour with our whole might*, the means will not succeed; and 'tis as good not at all, as not to purpose. The *Difficulties* will not be overcome by *cold Faith*, or *sleepy Prayers*, or *remiss Endeavours*: A very *intense degree* of these is necessary.

(3.) *Our striving must be constant*; we must not *begin*, and *look back*, Heb. x. 38. or *run a while*, and *stop in midd course*, 1 Cor. ix. 24. and content our selves with *some attainments*, and think we have *arrived*, Phil. iii. 14.

If we do so, we shall find our selves dangerously mistaken. The *Crown* is at the end of the *Warfare*, and the *Prize* at the end of the *Race*. If we will succeed, we must hold on : *The life of one that strives, as he ought, must be a continual motion forwards ; always proceeding, always growing.*

If we *strive thus*, we cannot fail ; if any of *these qualifications* be wanting, we cannot but miscarry. And hence no doubt it is, that many that *seek to enter* shall not be able, and the presumed sons of the Kingdom are shut out, *Mat. viii. 12.* They *seek*, and are very desirous to be admitted ; They do *something*, and *strive* ; but their *striving* is *partial*, or *careless*, or *short* ; by reason of which defects, they do not overcome, and shall not enter.

This is a *dangerous Rock*, and perhaps there are as many undone by *cold*, and *half striving*, as by not *striving at all*. He that hath done *something*, *presumes* he is *secure* ; He goes the round of ordinary Duties, but advanceth nothing

thing in his way : He *overcometh* none of the great *Difficulties*, none of the *Habits*, or *Natural Inclinations* : He is contented with *other* things that make a more *glorious shew* ; though they *signifie less* ; and perhaps *despise* these, under the Notion of *Morality* ; and so presuming, that he is a *Saint*, too soon, he never comes to be *one at all* : such are the *seekers* shall not be able to enter : Their *seeking* imports *some striving* ; but 'tis *such*, as, though it be *specious*, yet it is *imperfect*, and will not succeed. And hence the *THIRD Proposition* ariseth, that I proposed to discourse.

CHAP. III.

THE danger of mistaking in the Marks and Measures of Godliness. Instances of the meer Animal Religion; how far it may go, in Faith, in Prayer, and in Endeavour; discoursed in several Particulars; and therein the whole mystery of the Modern Pharisaick Godliness is discovered, and shewn to be short and insufficient. Objections against the severity of the Discourse, answered.

SECT. I.

(III.) **T**HAT there is a sort of striving that will not procure an entrance: implied in these words, *For many will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.*

'Tis

'Tis a dangerous thing to be flattered into a *false peace*; and to take up with *imperfect Godliness*; to reconcile the *hopes* of Heaven to our *beloved sins*, and to judge our conditions *safe* upon *insufficient grounds*. This multitudes do, and 'tis the great danger of our days; Men cannot be *contented* without doing *something* in Religion; but they are *contented with a little*. And then they reckon themselves *godly*, before they are *virtuous*; and take themselves to be *Saints*, upon such things as will not distinguish a *good man* from a *bad*.

We seek after *Marks* of *Godliness*, and would be glad to know, *how* we might try our state; The thing is of great importance; and if the *Signs* we judge by are either *false*, or *imperfect*, we are decieved to our undoing. Meer *Speculative* mistakes about *Opinions*, do no great hurt; but error in the *Marks* and *Measures* of Religion, is deadly. Now there are fundry things commonly taken for *signs* of *Godliness*, which

which though they are *something*, yet they are not *enough*; They are *hopeful* for *beginnings*, but nothing worth when they are our *end*, and *rest*. They are a kind of *seeking*, and *imperfect striving*; but not *such* as *overcometh* the *difficulties* of the way, or wil procure us an *entrance* at the *Gate*. Therefore to disable the *flattering*, *insufficient marks* of *Godliness*, I shal discover in pursuance of the *Third Proposition*, *How far a man may strive in the exercises of Religion*, and yet be found at last among those *seekers* that shall not be able to enter. And though I have intimated something of this in the general before, yet I shall now more particularly shew it in the *Instances* that follow. And in these I shall discover a *Religion* that may be called *Animal*, to which the *Natural* man may attain.

S E C T. II.

(I.) **A** Man may believe the Truths of the Gospel, & assent hearti-

ly to all the Articles of the Creed: and if he proceeds not, he is no further by this, than the faith of Devils, Jam. ii. 19.

(2.) He may go on, and have a great thirst to be more acquainted with Truth; He may seek it diligently in Scripture, and Sermons, and good Books; and knowing Company; And yet do this, by the motion of no higher principle, than an inbred curiosity, and desire of knowledge; and many times this earnestness after Truth, proceeds from a proud affection to be wiser than our Neighbours, that we may pity their darknesse; or the itch of a disputing humour, that we may out talk them; or a design to carry on, or make a party, that we may be called Rabbi, or serve an interest: And the Zeal for Truth that is set on work by such motives, is a spark of that fire that is from beneath: 'Tis dangerous to a mans self, and to the publick weal of the Church, and mankind. But the man proceeds, and is

(3.) Very much concern'd to defend, and propagate his Faith: and the Phari-

sees

sees were so in relation to theirs, *Mat.* xxiii. 15. and so have been many Professors of all the Religions that are, or ever were. Men naturally love their own Tenents, and are ambitious to mould others judgements according to theirs. There is glory in being an insurter of other men; and turning them to our ways, & opinions: so that here is nothing yet above Nature; nothing but what may be found in many that seek, and are shut out. But,

(4.) Faith works greater effects than these, and Men offer themselves to Martyrdom for it; This, one would think should be the greatest height, and an argument that all the difficulties of the way, are overcome by one that is fore-solved; and that the Gate cannot but be opened to him. And so, no doubt, it is, when all things else are sutable: But otherwise these consequences by no means follow. St. Paul supposeth that a man may give his body to be burned, and not have Charity, without which his Martyrdom will not profit,

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1 Cor. xiii. For one to deny his Religion, or what he believes to be certain, and of greatest consequence, is dishonourable and base: and some out of principles of meer natural bravery, will die rather than they will do it: and yet, upon the other accounts, be far enough from being heroically vertuous. Besides, the desire of the glory of Martyrdom, and Saintship after it, may in some be stronger than the terrors of Death: and we see frequently, that men will sacrifice their lives to their honour and reputation: yea to the most contemptible shadows of it. And there is no passion in us so weak, no lust so impotent, but hath, in many instances, prevail'd over the fear of dying. Every Appetite hath had its Martyrs: and all Religions theirs; and though a man give his body to be burnt for the best, and have not Charity, viz. Prevalent love to God and Men, it will not signifie: So that Martyrdom is no infallible mark, nor will it avail any thing, except sincere endeavour to overcome the greater

greater *difficulties*, have gone before it. Thus far *Faith* may go without effect: and yet one step further,

(5.) *Men may confidently rely upon Christ for salvation, and be firmly persuaded that he hath justified, and will make them happy. They may appropriate him to themselves, and be pleased mightily in the opinion of his being theirs. And yet notwithstanding this confidence, may be in the number of those seekers that shall not enter. For Christ is the Author of eternal life only to those that obey him, Heb. v. 9. and to obey him, is to strive vigorously, and constantly, to overcome all our sinful inclinations and habits. And those that trust he will save them, though they have never seriously set about this work, deceive themselves by vain presumption, and in effect say, that he will dissolve or dispense with his Law in their favour. For he requires us to deny ourselves, Mar. viii. 34. To mortifie the body, Rom. viii. 13. To love enemies, Mat. v. 44. To be Meek Mat. xi. 29.*

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and Patient, Jam. v. 8. and Humble, 1 Pet. v. 7. and just, Mat. vii. 12. and Charitable, Heb. xiii. 16. and Holy, as he that called us is holy, 1 Pet. i. 15. And he hath promised us to save upon no other terms; For all these are included in Faith, when 'tis taken in the justifying sense; and this is the way of Happiness: If we walk not in this, but in the paths of our own choosing, our relying upon Christ is a mockery, and will deceive us.

We may indeed be confident, and we ought, that he will save all those that so believe as to obey him; but may not trust that he will save us except we are some of those. To rely upon Christ for our salvation, must follow our sincere and obedient striving, and not go before it.

The mistake of this is exceeding dangerous, and I doubt hath been fatal to many. The sum is, To rely on Christ without a resolute and steady endeavour to overcome every sin and temptation, will gain us nothing in the end but shame and disappointment: For 'tis not every

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one that saith unto him, Lord, Lord, shall enter into Heaven, but he that doth the will of his Father which is in Heaven, Mat. vii. 21. The foolish Virgins relied upon him, and expected he should open to them : Lord, Lord, open to us, Mat. xxv. 11. but he kept them out, and would not know them, ver. 11.

Thus of the First imperfect Mark of Godliness ; A man may upon the account of meer Nature, arrive to all the mentioned degrees of Faith ; and yet if his endeavours in the practice of Christian virtues be not sutable, he will certainly come short at last.

SECT. III.

(II) **A** Man may be very devout, and given much to Prayer, be very frequent and earnest in it : may have the gift of expressing himself fluently, without the help of Form or Meditation : yea he may be so intent and taken up in these exercises, that he may as it were be ravish'd out of himself by the
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the fervours of his spirit; so that he really kindles very high affections as wel in others, as in himself: And yet: If he rests in this, and such like things, as Religion, and reckons that he is accepted of God for it; if he allow himself in any *unmortified* lusts, and think to compound for them by his Prayers, he is an evil man notwithstanding, and one of those seekers that shal not be able to enter. The Pharisees, we know, were much given to Prayer: They were long in those devotions, and very earnest in them, often repeating the same expressions, out of vehemence. Ignatius Loyola, founder of the Jesuites, was a man almost *ecstatical* in his Prayers: and Hacket the Blasphemer, executed in the dayes of Queen Elizabeth, was a person of Seraphical Devotion, and would pray those that heard him even into transports. Basilides the cruel Duke of Mosco, is said to have his hands almost continually lifted up in Prayer, except when they were employed in some barbarous and bloody Execution: And we

we have *known* and *felt* one not much unlike him. There are infinite instances in our dayes of this *dangerous* sort of *evil men*.

And we may learn hence, that the greatest gift of *Prayer*, and *earnestness* and *frequency* in it, is no good mark of *Godliness*, except it be attended with *sincere*, *constant* and *virtuous* endeavours.

For some men have a *natural* *spice* of *Devotion* in a *Religious Melancholy*, which is their temper; and such have commonly *strong Imaginations*, and *Zealous affections*, which when they are heated, *flame forth* into great *heights*, and *expressions* of *devotion*: The *warm phancy* furnisheth words and *matter* readily and unexpectedly, which many times begets in the man a conceit that he is *inspired*, and that his *Prayers* are the *breathings* of the *Holy Ghost*: or at least, that he is *extraordinarily* *afflicted* by it: which belief kindles his *affections* yet *more*, and he is carried beyond himself, even into the *third hea-*

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vens, and suburbs of glory, as he fancies, and so he makes no doubt, but that he is a Saint of the first rank, and special favorite of Heaven ; when all this while, he may be really a bad man full of Envy, and Malice ; Pride, and Covetousness : Scorn, and ill Nature : contempt of his Betters, and disobedience to his Governours. And while it is so, notwithstanding those glorious things, he is no further than the Pharisee. Heartly and humble desire, though imperfectly expressed, and without this pomp, and those wonders, is far more acceptable to God, who delights not in the exercises of meer Nature, Psal. cxlviii. 10. but is well pleased with the expressions of Grace in those that fear him.

So that a sincere and lowly-minded Christian that talks of no immediate incomes, or communications ; and perhaps durst not, out of reverence, trust to his own present conceptions in a work so solemn, but useth the help of some pious form of words suitable to his desires and wants, who is duly sensible of his
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sins, and the necessity of overcoming them; and is truly and earnestly desirous of the Divine aids, in order to it: such a one as *this* Prays by the Spirit, and will be assisted by it: while the other doth all by *meer Nature* and *imitation*, and shall not have those *spiritual* aids which he never *heartily desires*, nor *intends to use*.

This, I think, I may truly and safely say: But for the Controversie between *Forms* and *Conceived Prayers*, which of them is *absolutely best*, I determine nothing of it here. And indeed, I suppose that in their own nature, they are alike indifferent, and are more or less accepted, as they partake more or less of the *Spirit of Prayer*, viz. of *Faith*, *Humility*, and *holy desire* of the good thing we pray for; and a man may *have these* that prays by a *Form*; and he may *want* them that takes the *other* way, and thinks himself in a dispensation much above it. So that my business is not to set up one of these ways of Devotion against the other; but

but to shew, that the *heights* and *vehementies* of many warm people in their *unpremeditated* prayers, have nothing in them *supernatural* or *Divine*, & consequently, of themselves, they are no *marks* of *Godliness*: which I hope no one thinks I speak to discredit those *pious* ardours that are felt by *really devout* souls, when a *vigorous* sense of God, and *Divine* things, doth even sometimes transport them: Far be it from me to design any thing so *impious*; My aim is only to note, that there are *complexional heats* raised, many times by *fancy* and *self-admiration*, that look like *these*, in persons who really have little of God in them: and we should take care that we are not deceived by them. *Thus far* also those may go that notwithstanding *shall* not enter. I add,

S E C T. I V.

(III) **A** Man may endeavour some things likewise, and so strive in the last sense; and yet for want of

of some of the mentioned Qualifications, his work may miscarry, and himself with it.

(1.) There is no doubt, but that an evil man may be convinced of his sin and vileness, and that even to anguish and torment. The Gentiles, saith the Apostle, Rom. ii. 14. which have not the Law, shew the works of the Law written in their hearts, their thoughts in the mean time accusing, or excusing one another. Conscience often stings and disquiets the vilest sinners; and sometimes extorts from them lamentable confessions of their sins, and earnest declamations against them. They may weep bitterly at their remembrance, and be under great heaviness, and dejection upon, their occasion. They may speak vehemently against sin themselves, and love to have others to handle it severely. All this bad men may do upon the score of natural fear, and self love, and the apprehension of a future Judgment. And now such convictions will naturally beget some endeavours :

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A convinced understanding will have some influence upon the will and affections. The mind in the unregenerate, may lust against the flesh, as that doth against it.

So that (2.) such a meer animal man may promise, and purpose, and endeavour in some pretty considerable measure: but then, he goes not on with full resolution, but wavers, and stops, and turns about again; and lets the law of the members, that of death and sin, to prevail over him. His endeavour is remiss, and consequently ineffectual; it makes no conquests, and will not signify. He sins on, though with some regret; and his very unwillingness to sin, while he commits it, is so far from lessening, that it aggravates his fault: It argues that he sins against conscience, and conviction; and that sin is strong and reigns.

'Tis true indeed St. Paul, Rom. 7. makes such a description seemingly of himself, as one might think concluded him under this state; He saith, vers. 8.

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That sin wrought in him all manner of concupiscence: vers. 9. That sin revived, and he died: vers. 14. That he was carnal; and again, sold under sin, vers. 20. That sin dwelt in him, and wrought that which he would not: vers. 23. That the law of his Members led him into captivity to the law of sin: and vers. 25. That he obeyed the law of sin.

If this be so, and St. Paul, a regenerate man, was in this state, it will follow, that seeking and feeble endeavour, that overcometh no difficulty, may yet procure an entrance, and he that is come hitherto, viz. to endeavour, is safe enough though he do not conquer.

This Objection presseth not only against this head, but against my whole Discourse, and the Text it self. Therefore to answer it, I say, That the Apostle here is not to be understood of himself, but he describes the state of an unregenerate man, though he speaks in the first person, a Figure that was ordinary with this Apostle, and frequent enough in common speech: Thus we say,

say, *I am thus, and thus, and did so, and so*, when we are describing a state, or actions in which perhaps we in person are not concerned.

In this sense the best Expositors understand these expressions, and those excellent Divines of our own, Bishop Taylor, and Dr. Hammond, and others have noted to us, That this *description* is directly contrary to all the *Characters* of a regenerate man, given elsewhere by *this*, and the other Apostles. As he is said to be *dead to sin*, Rom. vi. 11. *Free from sin, & the servant of Righteousness*, Rom. vi. 18. That *he walks not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*, Rom. viii. 1. That *the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath made him free from the law of sin and death*, Rom. viii. 2. That *he overcometh the world*, Joh. 5. 4. He *sinneth not*, 1 Joh. iii. 6. He *hath crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts*, Gal. v. 24. Which *Characters* of a truly regenerate person, if they be compared with those above-cited out of Ro. vii. it will appear, that they are as con-

trary, as 'tis possible to speak; and by this, 'tis evident that they describe the two contrary states.

For can the regenerate be full of all manner of concupiscence, and at the same time be crucified to the flesh, and it's affections and lusts? one, in whom sin revives while he dies; and yet one that is dead to sin? carnal and yet not walking after the flesh, *but* after the Spirit; sold under sin, and yet free from sin? Having sin dwelling in him; and a captive to sin; and obeying the law of sin; and yet free from the law of sin and death? How can these things consist? To tel us, 'Tis so, and 'tis not so, and to twist such contradictions into Orthodox Paradoxes, are pretty things to please Fools and Children; but the wiser sort care not for such riddles, as are not sense.

I think 'tis evident enough then, that the Apostle in that mistaken Chapter, relates the feeble, impotent condition of one that was convinced and strove a little, but not to purpose. And if we find ourselves comprised by that description, though

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though we may be never so sensible of the evil and danger of a *sinful course*, and may endeavour some small matter, but without *success* we are yet under that evil, and obnoxious to that danger: For he that strives in earnest, conquers at last, and advanceth still, though all the work be not done at once. So that if we endeavour and gain nothing, our endeavour is peccant, and wants Faith or Prayer for Divine aids, or constancy or vigor; and so, Though we may seek we shall not be able to enter.

But (3) An Imperfect, striver may overcome sin in some Instances, and yet in that do no great matter neither, if he lies down and goes no further: There are some sins we outgrow by age, or are indisposed to them by bodily infirmity, or diverted by occasions, and it may be by other sins; and some are contrary to Worldly Interests, to our credit, or health, or profit; and when we have been in any great degree prejudiced by them in these, we fall out with those sins, and cease from them, and so by resoluti-

on and disuse, we master them at last fully : which, if we went on, and attempted upon all the rest were something : But when we stop short in these petty victories, our general state is not altered ; He that conquers some evil appetites, is yet a slave to others ; and though he hath prevailed over some difficulties, yet the main ones are yet behind.

Thus the imperfect striver masters, it may be, his beastly appetite to *intemperate drinking*, but is yet under the power of *love of Riches*, and *vain pleasure*. He ceaseth from open *debauchery*, but entertains *spiritual wickedness* in his heart : He will not *Swear*, but will *backbite* and *rail* : He will not be *Drunk*, but will *damn* a man for not being of *his opinion* : He will not *prophane* the *Sabbath*, but will *defraud* his Neighbour.

Now these *half conquests*, when we rest in them, are as good as none at all. Then shall I not be ashamed when I have regard to all thy Commandments,
saith

saith the Kingly Prophet, *Psal cxix. 6.*
'Tis *shameful* to give off, when our
work is but *half* done; *what* we do,
casts the greater reproach upon us for
what we omit. To *cease* to be *prophane*,
is something as a *passage*, but nothing
for an *end*. We are not *Saints* as soon as
we are *civil*. 'Tis not only *gross* sins that
are to be *overcome*. The *wages* of
sin is *death*, not only of the *great* and
capital, but of the *smallest*, if they
are indulged. The *Pharisee* applauded
himself, that he was not like the *Ex-*
tortioners, *Adulterers*, and *unjust*, nor
like the *Publican*, that came to pray
with him, *Luk xviii. 11.* and yet he
went away never the more *justified*. The
unwise Virgins were no *profligate* *livers*,
and yet they were *shut out*.

He that will enter, must strive a-
gainst *every* corrupt appetite and in-
clination. A *less* leak will sink a Ship,
as well as a *greater*, if no care be taken
of it. A *Consumption* will kill, as well as
the *Plague*; yea sometimes the *less*
Disease may in the event prove more

deadly, than the *greater*; for small distempers may be neglected, till they become *incurable*: whereas the *great* ones awaken us to speedy care for a remedy. A *small* hurt in the finger *flashed*, may prove a *gangreen*, when a *great* wound in the *head*, by seasonable applications is *cured*.

'Tis unsafe then to content our selves with *this*, that our sins are not *font* and *great*; those we account *little ones* may prove as *fatal*, yea they are sometimes more *dangerous*: For we are apt to think them *none at all*, or *Venial infirmities* that may consist with a *flare of grace*, and Divine favour; we *excuse* and make *Apologies* for them, and fancy that *Hearing*, and *Prayer*, and *Confession* are atonements enough for *these*. Upon which accounts I am apt to believe, that the less notorious Vices have ruined as many as the greatest Abominations. Hell doth not consist only of *Drunkards*: and *Swearers*, and *Sabbath-breakers*: No, the *demure Pharisee*, the *plausible Hypocrite*, and *formal Professor*,

fessor, have their place also in *that lake of fire*. The *great impieties* do often *startle* and *awaken* conscience, and be-
get strong convictions, and so some-
times excite resolution, and vigorous
striving: while men hug themselves in
their *lesser sins*, and carry them unrepen-
ted to their graves.

The sum is, We may *overcome some sins*, and turn from the *grosser sort of wickedness*, and yet if we endeavour not to subdue the *rest*, we are still in the condition of *unregeneracy & death*, and though we *thus seek*, we shall not enter.

(4.) *A Man may perform many duties of Religion. and that with relish and delight, and yet misarry. As,*

(1.) He may be *earnest* and *swift to hear*, and follow Sermons constantly from one place to another, and be exceedingly pleased and affected with the Word, and yet be an *evil Man*. and in a *bad state*. Herod heard *John Baptist* gladly, Mark vi. 20. and he that re-
ceived the seed into stony places, re-

ceived it joyfully, Mat. xiii. 20. Zeal for hearing doth not always arise from a conscientious desire to learn, in order to practise, but sometimes it proceeds from an itch after novelty and notions, or an ambition to be famed for Godliness; or the importunity of natural conscience, that will not be satisfied except we do something; or a desire to get matter to feed our opinions, or to furnish us with pious discourse; I say, earnestness to hear ariseth very often from some of these; and when it doth so, we gain but little by it: yea, we are dangerously tempted to take this for an infallible token of our Saintship and so to content our selves with this Religion of the ear, and to disturb every body with the abundance of our disputes and talk, while we neglect our own spirits, and let our unmortified affections and inclinations rest in quiet, under the shadow of these specious services.

So that when a great affection to hearing seiseth upon an evil man, 'tis odds but it doth him hurt; It puffs him
up.

up in the conceit of his Godliness, and makes him pragmatical, troublesome, and censorious; He turns his food into poison: Among bad men, those are certainly the worst, that have an opinion of their being godly; and such are those that have itching ears, under the power of vicious habits and inclinations. An earnest diligent hearer then, may be one of those who seeks, and is shut out. And so may.

(2.) He that *Fasts* much, and *severely*: The Jews were exceedingly given to fasting, and they were very severe in it. They abstained from all things pleasant to them, and put on sackcloth, and sower looks & mourned bitterly, and hung down the head, and sate in ashes; so that one might have taken these for very holy penitent, mortified people, that had a great antipathy against their sins, and abhorrence of themselves for them: And yet God complains of these strict severe Fasters, Zech vii. 5. *That they did not Fast unto him; but fasted for strife and debate*, Isa. lviii. 4. Their Fasts were not
such

such as he had chosen, to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burden, and to let the oppressed free, vers. 6. But they continued, notwithstanding their Fasts, and Gods admonitions by his Prophets, to oppress the widow, and fatherless, and poor, Zech. vii. 10.

Thus meer natural and evil men sometimes put on the garb of Mortification, and exercise rigors upon their bodies and external persons, in exchange for the indulgences they allow their beloved appetites; and while the strict Discipline reacheth no further, though we keep days, and fast often, yet this will not put us beyond the condition of the Pharisee, who tasted twice in the week, as himself boasted, Luke, xviii. 12. And,

(3.) An imperfect striver may be very much given to pious and religious discourses: He may love to be talking of Divine things; especially of the love of Christ to sinners, which he may frequently speak of with much earnestness and affection, and have that dear name
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always at his tongues end to *begin* and *close* all his sayings ; and to *fill* up the *void* places, when he wants what to say next : and yet *this* may be a *bad* man, who never felt those Divine things he talks of ; and never *loved Christ* heartily, and as he ought.

‘Twas observed before, that there are some who have a sort of *Devoutness*, and *Religion* in their particular *Complexion* ; and if such are *talkative* (as many times they are) they will easily run into *such* discourses, as *agree* with their *temper*, and take pleasure in them for *that* reason ; and for *this* also, because they are apt to gain us reverence, and the good opinion of those with whom we converse, And such as are by nature disposed for this faculty, may easily get it by *imitation* and remembrance of the *devout formes* they hear, and read : so that there may be nothing *Divine* in *all this* ; nothing, but what may consist with *unmortified* lusts and affections : And though such talk earnestly of the *love of Christ*, and express.

press a mighty love to his *name*, yet this may be too without any real conformity unto him in his *Life, and Laws*. The Jews spoke much of *Moses*, in him they *believed*, and in him they *trusted*, John v. 45. His *name* was a *sweet* sound to their ears, and 'twas very *pleasant* upon their *tongues*; and yet they *bated* the Spirit of *Moses*, and had no love to those *Laws* of his, which condemned their wicked actions. And we may see how many of those *love Christ* that speak often, and affectionately of him, by observing how they *keep his Commandments*, John xiv. 15. especially those of *meekness, mercy, and universal love*.

Thus *imperfect strivers* may imploy themselves in the *external offices* of Religion: I have instanced only in *Three*, the like may be said of the rest. And to this. I add, That they may not only exercise themselves in the *outward matters* of duty, but may arrive to some things that are accounted greater *heights*, and are really more and *spiritual*, and *refined*. To instance.

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S E C T. V.

(1.) **T**hey may have *some love to God, Goodness, and good men.* The Soul naturally loves *beauty, and perfection*; and all mankind apprehend *God, to be of al Beings, the most beautiful, and perfect*, and therefore must needs have an *intellectual love* for him: The reason *that love* takes no hold of the *passions* in *wicked men*, is, partly because they are *diverted* from the thoughts of Him, by the *objects of sense*; but chiefly, because they consider him as their *enemy*, and therefore can have no *complacency, or delight* in him, who they think hath nothing but thoughts of *enmity, and displeasure* against them. But if once they come to be *perswaded* (as many times, by such false marks, as I have recited, they are) that God is their *Father, and peculiar Friend*; that they are his *chosen, and his darlings*, whom he loved from *eternity, and to whom*

whom he hath given his Son, and his Spirit, and will give *Himself*, in a way of the fullest enjoyment: Then, the Love that before was only an *esteem* in the *understanding*, doth *kindle* in the *affections* by the help of the conceit of Gods loving them so dearly, and the passion thus hated, runs out, even into *seraphick, & rapturous Devotions*; while yet all this, is but *meer animal love*, excited chiefly, by the love of *our selves*, not of the *Divine Perfections*. And it commonly goes no further, then to *earnest* expressions of extraordinary love to God in our *Prayers*, and *Discourses*, while it appears not in any *singular obedience* to his *Laws*, or *generous*, and *universal love* to mankind: which are the ways whereby the true *Divine love* is exprest; for, *This is the love of God, that we keep his Commandments*, saith the Apostle, 1 John v. 3. And as to the other thus, *If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us*, 1 John iv. 12. And on the contrary, *If a man say, I love God, and*

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hateth his brother, he is a lyar, i John iv. 20. *Charity* then, and *universal obedience* are the *true* arguments, and expressions of our love to God; and *these* suppose a *victory* over corrupt *inclinations*, and *self will*. But the other love which ariseth from the conceit of our *speciall dearness* to God upon *insufficient* grounds; that goes no further then to some *suavities*, and *pleasant fancies* within our selves; and some *passionate complements* of the *Image* we have set up in our imaginations. *This Love* will consist with *Hatred*, and *contempt* of all that are not like our selves; yea and it will produce it: those *poisonous fruits*, and *vile affections* may be encouraged, and cherish'd under it.

So that there may be *some love to God* in *evil men*: But while *self-love* is the *only motive*, and the more *prevalent passion*, it signifieth nothing to their advantage.

And as the *imperfect striver* may have *some love to God*, so he may to *piety* and *vertue*: every man loves these in

Idea.

Idea. The vilest sinner takes part in his affections with the *vertuous* and *religious*, when he seeth them described in *History* or *Romance*; and hath a detestation for those, who are character'd as *impious* and *immortal*. *Virtue* is a great *Beauty*, and the mind is taken with it, while 'tis consider'd at a distance; and our corrupt *interests*, and sensual *affections* are not concern'd. 'Tis *These* that recommend *for* to our *love*, and *choice*, while the *mind* stands on the side of *virtue*: with that we serve the *Law of God*, but with the *flesh* the *Law of sin*, Rom. vii. 25. So that most wicked men, that are not degenerated into meer *Brutes*, have this *mental* and *intellectual* love to *goodnesse*: That is, they *approve*, and *like* it in their *minds*, and would *practise* it also, were it not for the *prevalent* *bi- as* of *flesh* and *sense*.

And hence it will follow likewise, That the *same* may *approve* and *respect* *goodmen*; They may *reverence* and *love* them for their *Charity*, *Humility*, *Justice* and *Temperance*, though themselves are persons

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persons of the *contrary Character*; yet they may have a great and ardent affection for those that are eminently *pious*, and *devout*, though they are very *irreligious* themselves. The *conscience* of *virtue*, and of the *excellency* of *Religion*, may produce this in the meer *natural* man, who is under the *dominion* of *vile inclinations*, and *affections*; and therefore this is no good *mark* of *godlinesse* neither. Our *love* to *God* and *goodnesse* will not stead us, except it be *prevalent*. And as the *love* described may be *natural*, and a *meer animal* man may arrive unto it: So,

(II.) He may to an *extraordinary* *zeal* for the *same things* that are the *objects* of his *love*. *Hot tempers* are *eager*, where they take either *kindnesse* or *displeasure*. The *natural* man that hath an *animal love* to *Religion*, may be *violent* in *speaking*, and *acting* for things appertaining to it. If his *temper* be *devotional* and *passionate*, he becomes a *mighty zealot*, and fills all places with the *fame* of his *godlinesse*: His *natural*
fire

fire moves this way, and makes a mighty blaze. *Ahab* was very zealous, and 'tis like 'twas not only his own interest that made him so, *2 Kings* x. 16. The *Pharisees* were zealous people, and certainly their zeal was not always personated, and put on, but real: Though they were Hypocrites, yet they were such, as, in many things, deceived themselves, as well as others. They were zealous for their *Traditions*, and they believ'd 'twas their duty to be so. *St. Paul* while a persecutor, was zealous against the *Disciples*, and he thought he ought do many things against that name. And our Saviour foretells, that those zealous murderers that should kill his *Saints*, should think, *They did God good service in it*, *John* xvi. 2. So that all the zeal of the natural man is not feigning, and acting of a part; nor hath it always evil objects. The *Pharisees* were zealous against the wickednesse of the *Publicans*, and *Sinners*. Zeal then, and that in earnest for Religion, may be in bad men. But then, this is to be noted,

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ghed, that 'tis commonly about *opinions*
 and *external rites*, and *usages*, and such
 est matters as appertain to *first Table Du-*
 the ties, while usually the same men are
 er-very cold, in reference to the *Duties* of
 so-the *Second*: And when zeal is *partial*,
 gh-and spent about the little things that
 re-tend not to the overcoming the *difficul-*
 ed-ties of our way, or the *perfecting* of hu-
 re-mane Nature, 'tis a meer *animal ser-*
 y-vour, and no *Divine Fire*. And the
 t-natural man, the *seeker that shall not*
 us-enter, may grow up to another height
 at-that looks *gloriously* and seems to speak
 t-mighty things. As,

(III.) He may have great comforts
 in religious meditations, and that even
 to rapturous excesses. He may take these
 for sweet communion with God, and the
 joys of the *Holy Ghost*, and the earnest
 of *Glory*, and be lifted up on high by
 them, and inabled to speak in wonder-
 ful ravishing strains; and yet notwith-
 standing be an evil man and in the estate
 of such as shall be shut out.

For this we may observe, That those
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whose complexion inclines them to devotion, are commonly much under the power of *melancholy*; and they that are so, are mostly very *various* in their tempers; sometimes *merry*, and *pleasant* to excess; and then plung'd as deep into the other extreme of *sadness*, and *dejection*: one while the *sweet humours* enliven the imagination, and present it with all things that are *pleasant* and *agreeable*. And then, the *black* blood succeeds, which begets clouds, and darkness, and fills the fancy with things *frightful*, and *uncomfortable*. And there are very few but feel such varieties in a degree in themselves. Now while the *sweet blood* and *humours* prevail, the person whose complexion inclines him to Religion, and who hath arrived to the degrees newly discours'd of (though a meer *natural* man) is full of inward *delight*, and *satisfaction*, and fancies at this turn, that he is much in the *favour* of God, and a sure *heir* of the *Kingdom* of Glory; which must needs excite in him many *luscious*, and *pleasant* thoughts: and

to and these further warm his imagination,
the which by new, and taking suggestions
are still raiseth the affections more; and so
m- the man is as it were transported be-
to yond himself, and speaks like one dropt
he from the clouds: His tongue flows with
on: Light, and Glories, and Communion,
en and Revelations, and Incomes; and
all then, believes that the Holy Ghost is the
e. Author of all this, and that God is in
s, him of a truth, in a special way of Mani-
d festation, and vouchsafement. This is
y one of the greatest Heights of the
r Animal Religion, and many times it
t proceeds from nothing more Divine.
e For when melancolick vapours pre-
vail again, the imagination is overcast,
and the fancy posselt by dismal and un-
comfortable thoughts: and the man,
whose head was but just before among
the Clouds, is now groveling in the Dust.
He thinks all is lost, and his condition
miserable, He is a cast away, and undone,
when in the mean while as to Divine
favour he is just where he was before,
or rather in a better state, since 'tis better
to be

to be humbled *with* reason, then to be lifted up *without* it. Such effects as these do meer *natural* passions & imaginations produce, when they are tinctured and heightened by *religious melancholy*. To deny ones *self*, and to overcome ones passions, and to live in a course of a *sober vertue*, is much more *Divine*, then all this.

'Tis true indeed, and I am far from denying it, that holy men feel those joys and communications of the *Divine Spirit* which are *no fancies*; and the Scripture calls them *great peace*, Ps. cxix. 165. and *joy in believing*, Rom. xv. 13. and the *peace of God that passeth all understanding*, Phil. iv. 7. But then, these *Divine vouchsafements* are not *rapturous*, or *ecstatical*. They are no *sudden flashes* that are gone in a moment, leaving the soul in the regions of sorrow, and despair: but *sober lasting comforts*, that are the *rewards* and *results* of vertue; the *rejoycings* of good conscience, 2 Cor. i. 12. and the *manifestations* of God to those rare souls who have

have overcome the *evils* of their *measures*, and the *difficulties* of the way, or are *vigorously* pressing on towards the mark, *Phil. iii. 14*. But for such as have only the *forms* of godliness, I have mentioned, while the *evil inclinations* and *habits* are indulged, whatever they pretend, al the *sweets* they talk of, are but the *imagery* of *dreams*, and the *pleasant delusions* of their *fancies*.

S E C T. VI.

THUS I have shewn how far the *meer Animal Religion* may go, in *imperfect striving*. And now I must expect to hear

(1.) That this is very *severe, uncomfortable Doctrine*; and if one that shall eventually be *shut out*, may do *all this*, what shall become of the *generality* of *Religious* men that never do *so much*; And if *all this* be *short*, what will be available; who then shall be saved?

To which I *Answer*, That we are not to make the *measures* of *Religion* and

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Happi.

Happiness out selves; but to take those that Christ Jesus hath made for us: And he hath told us, That except our *Righteousness* exceed the *Righteousness* of the Scribes and Pharisees, we shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of heaven, Mat. v. 20. Now the Scribes and Pharisees did things in the way of Religion, that were equal to all the particulars I have mentioned; yea they went beyond many of our glorious Professors, who yet think themselves in an high form of Godliness. They believed their Religion firmly, and Prayed frequently and fervently, and Fasted severely; They were exact, and exceeding strict in the observation of their Sabbaths, and hated scandalous and gross sins; and were very punctual in all the duties of outward Worship; and in many things supererrogated and went beyond what was commanded: Such zealous people were They; and They separated from the conversations and customs of other Jews, upon the account of their supposed greater Holiness and Purity.

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These were heights to which the Pharisees arrived; & a good Christian must exceed all this; And he that lives in a sober course of Piety, and Vertue; of self Government, and humble submission to God; of obedience to his Superiours, and Charity to his Neighbours; He doth really exceed it, and shall enter, when the other shall be shut out. So that, when our Saviour saith, that the Pharisaick Righteousness must be exceeded; the meaning is not, That a greater degree of every thing the Pharisees did, is necessary, but we must do that which in the nature and kind of it is better and more acceptable to God, viz. That whereas they placed their Religion in strict Fastings, and nice observations of Festivals; in lowd and earnest Prayers, and Zeal to get Proselytes; we should place ours, in sincere subjections of our wills to the will of God, in imitation of the life of Christ, and obedience of his Laws; in amending the faults of our natures and lives; in subduing our passions, and casting out

the *habits of evil* : These are much beyond the Religion of the *Phanarick Pharisee*; not in *shew and pomp*; but in *real worth, and divine esteem*. So that upon the whole, we have no reason to be discouraged, because They that do *so much* are *cast out*; since, though we find not those *heats, and specious things* in our selves which we observe in *them*, yet if we are more *meek, and modest, and patient, and charitable, and humble, and just*, our case is *better* ; and we have the *Power of Godliness*, when theirs is but the *Form*, And We, whom They accounted *aliens and enemies*, shall *enter* : while *they*, the presumed *friends and domesticks*, shall be *shut out*.

But (2.) I expect it should be again Objected against this severity of Discourse, That our Saviour saith, *Mat. xi. 20. That his yoke is easie, and his burden is light* : which place seems to cross all that hath been said about the Difficulties of Religion. And 'tis true it hath such an *appearance*, but 'tis no *more* : For the words look as *cross* to the

the *expressions* of the same Divine Author, concerning the *straightness* of the Gate, and *narrowness* of the Way, as to any thing I have delivered from those *infallible sayings*. Therefore to remove the *semblance* of *contrariety*, which the *objected Text* seems to have to those *others*, and to my Discourse, we may observe,

That when our Saviour saith, that his yoke is *easy*, the word we read *easy* is *χενός*, which signifieth *very good, excellent, gracious*; & the meaning I suppose is, That his Precepts had a *native beauty* and *goodness* in them; That they are *congruous* and *sutable* to our reasonable Natures, and *apt* instruments to make us *happy*; In which sense, *this* expression hath no *antipathy* to the *Text*, or to any thing I have said. And whereas 'tis added, [*My Burden is light*] I think by this, we are to understand, That his *Commands* are not of that *burdensome* nature, that the *Ceremonies* of the *Jewish Laws* were: Those were very cumbersome, and had nothing in their

nature to make them pleasant & agreeable; whereas his Religion had no *expensive, troublesome* Rites appendant to it; nor did it require any thing but our observation of those *Laws* which eternal *Reason* obligeth us to, and which of our selves we should choose to live under, were we freed from the *intanglements* of the *World*, and *interests* of *Flesh*. So that neither doth this *Objection* signify any thing against the scope of my Discourse.

CHAP. IV.

INFERENCES from the whole; concerning, (1) *The true notion of a State of Grace and Nature.* (2) *The great design of Religion to perfect humane nature.* (3.) *The agreement and oneness of Christianity and Morality.* (4) *The method of Grace on the souls of men.* (5.) *The nature of the Animal Religion.* (6) *The certain*

tain mark whereby to know our state.

(7) The power of Godliness, and the Forms of it.

SECT. I.

AND now I am at liberty to descend to the *improvement* of what I have said; and the things I have to add will be comprehended under these two Generals (1) *Inferences*, and a plain (2) *Advice* in order to practice. I begin with the *Inferences* and *Corollaries* that arise from the whole discourse. And

(1) We may collect, What is the state of Nature; and what the state of Grace. We have seen that 'tis the great business of Religion to overcome evil Inclinations, and the prevailing influence of sense and passion, & evil customs and example and worldly affections; And therefore the state of Nature consists in the power

and prevalency o *These*. *This* is that the Scripture calls the *Old man* Eph. iv. 22. The *Image of the earthy*, 1 Cor. xv. *Flesh*, Gal. v. 17. *Death*, Rom. vii. 24. *Darkness*, John iii. 19. and *old leaven*, 1 Cor. v. 7. On the contrary, *The state of Grace* is a state of *sincere striving* against them; which if it keeps on, ends in *Victory*. And this is call'd *Conversion*, Acts iii. 19. and *Renovation*, while 'tis in its *first motions*; And the *Divine Nature*, 2 Pet. i. 4. the *image of the heavenly*. 1 Cor. xv. 20 The *Spirit*, Gal. v. 16. *Light*, Ephes. v. 8. and *Life*, 1 Joh. iii. 14. when 'tis arriv'd to *more compleatness*, and *perfection*.

For our fuller understanding this, we may consider, That grace is taken (1) for *Divine favour*, (2) for *Christian Vertue* As it signifies *Divine favour*, so it is used.

(1) For these *helps and aids* God affords us, viz. the *Gospel*, Joh. i. 17. and the *influences of his Spirit*. 1 Cor. xii. 9. In this sense we are deliver'd from the *state of nature* by *Baptism*. viz.

viz. We are intitled to *divine helps*, which is a kind of *regeneration*; for we are born in a condition of *impotence* and *weakness*, and *destitution* of *spiritual assistances*; This is the *world of meer nature*; But then in *Baptism*, we are brought into the *world of the spirit*, that is, are put under its *influences*, and are assured of its *aids*, and so are *morally born again*: Not that this *Regeneration* alone will *save* us, without our *endeavours*; it imports only an *external relation*, and right to *priviledges*, and by *these* we may be *powerfully assisted* in our *striving*, if we use them.

But then (2) *Grace* too, as it signifies *divine favour*, implies his *special love*, and *kindness*, such as he vouchsafes to *holy*, and *vertuous men*: so that we may observe that there may be a *distinction* between a *state of grace*, and a *state of salvation*. A *state of Grace* in the former sense, is a *condition assisted* by the *influences* of *Gods Spirit*, and all *baptized persons* are in *that*. But if they

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use not those *helps*, they are not in Gods *special* favour; and so not in a *state* of *Salvation*. But when those *assurances* are duly imployed, and join'd with our *sincere endeavour*, then the person so using them, is in a *state* of *Salvation* also; and in Gods *special* love and favour. Thus of the *state* of *Grace* in the first sense as taken for *divine* favour.

(2) The word is also used for *Christian* *Virtue*, 2 Peter iii. 18. and *virtue* is call'd *grace*, because, 'tis wrought in us by the assistance of Gods *Spirit* and the *light* of the *Gospel*, which are *divine* favours; and to be in a *state* of *grace* in this sense, is to be a *vertuous* man, which supposeth *divine* aids, and intitles to *divine* love.

These things I have taken an occasion thus briefly to state; and I have done it, because there is oftentimes much confusion in mens discourses about *Grace*, and *Nature*, from which much trouble and many controversies have arisen. And by what I have said also in these brief hints, the Doctrine of our Church

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ods in the office of *Baptism*, may be understood clearly, and will appear to be very *sound* and *true*, notwithstanding the *petty* exceptions of those, that understand not what they say, nor whereof they affirm.

SECT. II.

(II) I may infer, That the great design of Religion and the Gospel is to perfect *Humane nature*. The *perfection* of our *natures* consists (as I have intimated) in the *subjection*, and *subordination* of the *affections* and *passions* to the *Mind*, as it is inlightned, and directed by the *divine Laws*, and those of *Reason*. This is the state of *integrity*, in which we were *first* made; and we lost it, by the rebellion of our *senses*, and inferior powers, which have usurpt the *government* of us ever since. Here is the *imperfection*, and *corruption* of our *natures*.

Now Religion designs to *remove* and *cure these*; and to restore us to our first, and happy state. Its business is not

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to reform our looks, and our language : or to model our actions, and gestures into a devout appearance; not only to restrain the practice of open prophane-
ness, and villany, nor to comfort us with the assurance of Gods loving us, we know not why : But to *cure* our *ill na-
tures*, to *govern* our *passions*; to *moderate* our *desires*, to throw out *pride* and *envy*, and all *uncharitable* surmisals, with the other *spiritual* sorts of wickedness; & thereby to make us *like* unto God, in whom there is no shadow of *sin*, or *imperfection* ; and so to render us fit objects of his *delight*, and *love*.

So that whatever doth not tend to make us some way or other *really better*, *better* in our *selves*, and better in all *Relations*, as *fathers*, and *children*, and *husbands* and *wives*, and *subjects*. and *governours*, and *neighbours*, and *friends*, is not Religion; It may be a *form* of *God-
liness*, but 'tis nothing to the *life*, and *power*. And where we see not *this effect* of Religion, let the professor of it be never so *high* and *glorious* in his profes-
sion,

tion, we may yet conclude that either his *Religion* is not good, or that he only *pretends*, and *really* hath it not.

This I take to be a consideration of great moment and great certainty, *viz.* That Christian Religion aims at the *bettering* and *perfecting* of our *natures*. For the things it commands relate either to *worship*, or *virtue*. The instances of *external* worship are *prayer*, and *praise*; both which are high acts of *gratitude* and *justice*, and they fit us for divine blessings, & keep us under a *sense* of God, & prepare us for *union* with him, which is the *highest* *perfection* of which the creature is capable, thus the *outward* acts of *worship* tend to our happiness: and the *inward* do infinitely the *same*.

They are *Faith*, and *Love*, and *Fear*. *Faith* in God supports, and relieves us in all afflictions, and distresses. The *love* of him is a *pleasure* and *solace* to us in all losses and disappointments, since he is an object most filling, and satisfying, and *one* that cannot be lost, except we wilfully thrust him from us. *Fear* of God hath

hath no torment ; 'Tis on slavish dread
 of his greatness and power ; but a reve-
 rence of his perfections, and a lothness to
 offend him, and this disposeth us also
 for the communications of his grace, and
 love, *Ps.* lxxxv. 9. And this it doth by
 congruity and its own nature ; which is
 to be said likewise of the others. So that
 they wold make those happy that practise
 them, whether happy had been positive-
 ly enjoyn'd, or not, & though no *express*
 rewards had been annex't unto them.

There are other two acts of worship
 which Christianity requires, which
 are instituted and positive, and
 respect Christ our Lord ; They are, the
Sacraments, Baptism, and the Lords Sup-
per ; both which are holy Rites, of high
 signification ; and seals of an excellent
Covenant between God and us, assur-
 ing us of pardon of sins, and all divine
 favours, upon the conditions of our
Faith, and repentance ; and more firmly
 oblige us to holy obedience, and de-
 pendance ; The only way in which we can
 be happy. Whence we see briefly, that
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all the parts of *worship* which Christianity binds upon us, tend to our *perfection* and *Felicity*.

And all the *vertues* that it commands, do the same; both those that respect us in a *personal*, and those others that relate to us as *members* of *Societies*. Thus *humility* recommended, *Mat. v. 3.* *Meekness* blest, *ver. 5* *purity*, *ver. 8.* are *vertues* that accomplish our *particular* persons, and make us *happy* in our selves. For of *Pride* cometh *Contention*, *Prov. xiii. 10.* And a great part of our troubles arise from *stomach* and *self-will* all which *humility* cures. And *meekness* also takes away the occasions of the numerous *mischiefs* we run into through the *rage* and disorder of our *passions*; and 'tis in it self *great beauty* and ornament, since it ariseth from the *due order*, and *government* of our *faculties*. *Purity* also, which comprehends *temperance* of all sorts, frees us from the tormenting *importunity* of those *desires*, that drag us out of our selves, and expose us to *sin*, and *folly*, and *temptation*,
and

and make us exceeding miserable; besides which it is a perfection that renders us *like* unto God, and the blest *Spirits* of the highest rank. And Christian vertues do not only accomplish, and make us happy in our *particular* persons, but in the more *publique* capacity also; They dispose us to a *quiet* obedience to our *governours* without *murmuring*, and *complaining*; and thereby the *publique peace* is secured; and all good things else in *that*.

But there are other *vertues* that Christianity enjoins, which have a more direct tendency to the *happinesse* of others, as *Justice*, Mat. vii. 12. *Charity*, 1 Cor. 13. *Loyalty*, Rom. xiii. and all other *publique* vertues may, I think, be comprehended under *these*. Where there is no *Justice*, every man preys upon another, and no mans property is safe. Where *Charity* is wanting, Jealousies, hatreds, envyings, back-bitings, and cruelties abound, which render the world deplorably unhappy. Where there is not *Loyalty*,
and

and *conscionable submission* to Governours, the *publique* is upon every occasion of commotion, involv'd in infinite miseries, and disasters. So that all the *precepts* of our *Religion* are in their own nature *proper instruments* to make us *happy*; and they had been *methods* of *Felicity* to be chosen by all reasonable creatures, though they had never been required by so great, and so sacred an Authority.

These things I have said, because I could not choose but take this occasion to recommend the *excellency*, and *reasonableness* of our Religion; And I have done it but only in brief hints, because it ariseth but upon a *Corollary* from my main subject, and from *this* I infer,

S E C T. I I I.

(III) **T**hat Christianity is the height, and perfection of morality. They *both* tend to the real bettering, and accomplishment of humane nature: But the *rules* and *measures* of *moral Philosophy* were weak and imperfect till *Christ Jesus* came: He *confirmed*

firmed and enforced all those precepts of vertue, that were written upon our hearts; and cleared them from many corruptions that were grown upon them through ignorance and vice, the glosses of the Jews, and false conceits of the Gentiles; and he inforced them anew by his Authority, and the knowledge he gave of divine aids, and greater rewards, and punishments, then were understood before; yea he enlarged it in some instances, such as loving enemies, and forgiving injuries. Thus Christ Jesus taught morality, viz. the way of living like men; And the 5. Chapter of Matthew is an excellent Lecture of this kind.

So that to disparage morality, is to disgrace Christianity it self; and to vilifie one of the ends of Christs coming into the world. For all Religion and all duties respect either God, our neighbour, or ourselves, and the duties that relate to these two last, are moral vertues. The Apostle St. James counted these Moralities of visiting the Widow and
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Fatherless, to be the *pure Religion* and *undefiled*, Jam. i. 17. And the Prophet *Micah* intimates, that those *moral* virtues of *justice* and *mercy*, were some of the main things that God required of us, *Micah*. vi. 8. Our Saviour saith, that the *whole Law* is summ'd up in these two, to *love God* with *all* our souls, and our *neighbour*, as *our selves*, Math. xxii, 13. which latter contains the duties of *morality*. And that which the *grace* of God in the Gospel *teacheth*, according to St. *Paul* is, to *live soberly*, *righteously*, and *godly* in this present world, Tit. ii. 11. There is no *godliness* without *morality*. All the *fruits of the Spirit* reckon'd up Gal. v: 22, are *morall virtues*. And when we are commanded to *grow in grace*, 2 Pet. iii, 18. *virtue* is partly understood. For one branch of what is call'd *Grace* in us, is *moral* virtue, produced by *divine* aids, *Christian* principles, and *incouragements*; though 'tis true, the word is extended to those duties that relate immediately to God also.

By which we see how *ignorantly*, and *dangerously* those people talk, that *disparage morality* as a dull, lame thing of no account, or reckoning. Upon this the *Religion* of the 2d. Table is by too many neglected; and the whole *mystery* of the new *Godliness* is lay'd in frequent hearing and devout *seraphick* talk, *luscious phancies*, new lights, incomes, *manifestations*, *sealings*, *in-dwellings*, and such like. Thus *Antinomianism*, and all kinds of *Phanaticism* have made their way by the disparagement of *morality*, and men have learnt to believe themselves the *chosen*, *pretious* people, while their *hearts* have been full of *malice*, and *bitternesse*, and their hands of *violence*, while they *despised dominions*, and *spoke evil of dignities*, *rebel'd* against the *Government*, destroyed *publique* peace, and endeavoured to bring all into *misery*, and *confusions*. 'Tis this diabolical project of dividing *morality* from *Religion*, that hath given rise and occasion to all these villanies. And while the practisers of such things have assumed

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med the name of the *only* godly, *Godline* it self hath been brought into *dis*grace by them; and *Atheism* encouraged to shew it self, in open *defiance* to *Religion*. Yea, through the *indiscretions*, & inconsideratenels of *some* preachers, the *phantastry*, and vain babble of *others*, and the general *disposition* of the people to *admire* what makes a great *shew*, & pretends to more then ordinary *spirituality*; things are, in many places, come to that pass, that those who teach *Christian vertue*, and *Religion* in *plainness* and *simplicity* without senseless *phrases*, and phantastick *affectations*, shall be reckon'd for *dry moralists*, and such as understand nothing of the *life*, and *power* of *Godline*. Yea, those people have been so long used to *gibberish* and *canting*, that they cannot understand *plain sense*; and *vertue* is become such a stranger to their *ears*, that when they hear it spoken of in a pulpit, they count the *preacher* a broacher of *new divinity*; and one that would teach the way to *heaven* by *Philosophy*: And he escapes well,

well, if they do not say, That he is an *Atheist*; or that he would reconcile us to *Gentilism*, and *Heathen Worship*. The danger and vanity of which ignorant humour, the contempt of morality, is apparent in the whole scope of my Discourse, and therefore I add no more concerning it here; but proceed to another Inference, which is,

S E C T. IV.

(IV.) That Grace and the new Nature, make their way by degrees on the soul; for the *difficulties* will not be removed, nor the *corrupt nature* subdued all at once. *Habits* that grow by repeated acts, time, and continuance, will not be expelled in a moment. No man can become greatly evil or good on a sudden. The Path of the just shines more and more to a perfect day, Prov. iv, 18. We do not jump from darkness into full light. We are not fully sanctified and converted in an instant. The day begins in an insensible dawn, and the Kingdom of

of heaven is like a grain of Mustard seed, Mat xiii. 31. It doth not start up presently to the stature of a tree. The Divine birth begins like the Natural, in an imperfect embryo.

There are some seeds of Knowledge and Goodness that God hath sown in our natures; these are excited by the Divine Grace and Spirit to convictions, which proceed to purposes; these to resolutions, and thence we pass to abstinence from, all gross sins, and the performance of outward Duties: and so at last by degrees, to vigorous attempts, for the destruction of evil habits and inclinations. When Grace is arrived to this eminent growth 'tis very visible, as the plant is when 'tis above the ground: But the beginnings of Conversion are not ordinarily perceived.

So that to catechize men about the punctual time, and circumstances of their Conversion, is an idle device and a great temptation to vanity and lying. Who can tell the exact moment when the night ends, & when the dawn enters:

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'Tis true indeed, the *passage* from the *excesses* of Wickedness, which begins in some extraordinary horrors and convictions, is sometimes very notable; but 'tis not *so* in *all* or *most*. The time of St. Paul's Conversion was eminent, but that change was from *great contrarieties* and *miraculous*, and therefore 'tis not to be drawn into instance. Both the *beginnings* and *minute* progressions of Grace, are usually undiscerned: We cannot see the *Grass* just putting out of the earth, or actually growing; but yet we find that it doth both. And *Grace* is better known in its *fruits*, than in its *rise*. By their *Fruits* ye shall know them, saith our Saviour, Mat xii. 33. and the *same* way we may know our selves.

S E C T. V.

(V.) We see that there is an Animal as well as a Divine Religion: A Religion that is but the effect & modification of complexion, natural fear, and self love.

love. How far *these* will go, we have seen, and how short it will prove in the end. The not noting *this*, hath been the sad occasion of deceiving many. Some observing great *heats* of zeal and devotion in the *modern Pharisees*, take these to be the *Saints* and good people; believing all the *glorious* things, which they assume to themselves: When *others*, that know them to be *envious* and *malitious*, *unjust* and *covetous*, *proud* and *ungovernable*, and cannot therefore look on them as such *choise holy* people, are apt to affirm all to be *hypocrisie* and *feigning*. In which sentences, *both* are mistaken for want of knowing that there is a *meer Animal Religion*, that will produce very *specious & glorious* effects. So that thogh the *Pharisee* Prays vehemently, and Fasts severely, and talks much of the love of God, and delights greatly in hearing and pious Discourse, and will suffer all things for what he calls his conscience; yet he is not to be concluded a *Saint* from hence, because the

meer Animal Religion may put it self forth in all *these expressions*.

And though *this Professor* be a *bad man, proud and covetous, malicious and censorious, sacrilegious and Rebellious,* yet we cannot thence be assured that he is an *Hypocrite*, in one sense, *viz.* such an one as *feigns all that he pretends*: But we may believe that he is really so affected with *Hearing, and Praying, and devout Company*, as he makes shew, and yet for all *this*, not alter our opinion of his being an *evil man*: since the *Animal Religion* will go as far as the things in which he glories.

There is nothing whereby the common people are drawn more easily into the ways of *Sects and Separations*, then by the observation of the *zeal and devotion* of those of the *factions*: These they take to be *Religion*, and the great matters of *Godliness*, and those the *religious* and *only godly people*. And so first they conceive a great opinion of them, and then follow them whithersoever they lead. For the generality of men

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are tempted into *Schism* and *Parties*, not so much by the *arguments* of *Fanaticks*, as by the *opinion* of their *Godliness*, which opinion is grounded upon those things, which may arise from the *meer Animal Religion*, and very commonly do so. This they understand not, & by this *ignorance* are betrayed into the snare of *Separation*, to the disturbance of the *Peace* of the *Church*, and their own great hurt and inconvenience. Whereas could they be made to know & consider that *complexion* and *natural passions* may bring forth all these fruits, they might be secured by this means against the tempting imposture; and learn that *Meekness* and *Patience*, *Affability* and *Charity*, *Justice*, and a *Peaceable, humble temper*, are better arguments of *Saintship* than all these. Thus a great mischief might be prevented; and there is another also that might be remedied by the same Observation; The inconvenience is this,

While the enemies of *Factions* object *Hypocrisie* to them, affirming that all they

they *do* and *say*, is meer *personating* and *pretence*; they confirm and settle those people in their way; for many of them *know*, that they are in *earnest*, and consequently that their opposers are mistaken in their judgments concerning them; by which they are better established in their own good opinion, and hardened against conviction; whereas did they consider such things as I have suggested, about the *Animal Religion*, and grant to them that they may be *serious*, believe themselves infinitely, and feel all those Warmths, which they pretend, and yet be *evil men*, and far enough from being *godly*; Did they shew them that all their *zeal* and *Devotion*, & more and greater than *theirs*, may arise from a principle that hath nothing *Divine* and *supernatural* in it: They would thereby strike them in the *right vein*, and bring them down from the high perch, whereon, by their *false marks*, they had placed themselves; and thereby disabuse them, and prevent the abuse of others.

S E C T:

S E C T. V I.

(VI.) **W**E see how we may know our state, whether it be that of Grace and Life; or the other sad one of Unregeneracy and Death. The state of Grace is a motion towards the recovery of the Divine Image, and a perfect victory over ourselves, and all corrupt inclinations and affections. The state of Unregeneracy and Death, is the continuance under the power and prevalency of sense, passion, and evil habits.

When 'tis a question to our selves, in which of these states we are; It must be supposed that we are arrived to something of Religion: For the grossly wicked cannot but know what their condition is. And the way I would propose to those others, who are yet uncertain, is this, viz. To take notice,

Whether they really design, and make any progress in Goodness. Every motion indeed cannot be felt or perceived; but if we go on, though never so insensibly,

time will shew that we are grown. If we *consider* what are our *particular defects*, and studiously apply *proper instruments* to remove them ; if we find success in thole indeavours, and that we are *better* this year, than we were the former; That our *Passions* are *better* governed, and our *inordinate affections* more *restrained*, and our *evil habits* and *inclinations* *less* powerful with us, 'tis an *infallible sign*, that we *live* and are in a *state of Grace*; that we shall at last arrive to a *perfect man in Christ Jesus*, Eph. iv. 13. and shall *attain if we faint not*, 2 Cor. iv. 1: whereas on the other hand, If we come to some *hopeful pitch* and *stand still* there, If *sin* and *temptations* be as *powerful* with us *now*, as they were a year ago, and our *inclinations & passions* just at the same pass, we are in a *bad state*, and *dead*. While the Plant grows, it *lives* and may become a *great tree*, though at present it be but *small*: whereas that whose stature is *bigger*, and more *promising*, if it *proceeds not*, *decays* and comes to nothing.

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. If Though we are *imperfect*, if we are *striving* and going towards perfection, God overlooks our *Infirmities*, and pardons them for Christs sake. This is our *sincerity*, and an effect of true *Faith*. But if on the other hand we think our selves *well*, and do not always attempt forwards, our *state* is *bad*, and our *sins* will be *imputed*. Be our pretences what they will, our *Faith* is not *sincere*, and will not *stead* us.

When we get to a certain *pitch* in *Religion*, and make *that* our *state*, 'tis an argument that our *Religion* was *meerly Animal*; and but a *mode* of *complexion*. *self love* and *natural fear*, When we overcome *some* sins, and are willing to spare and cherish *others*, 'tis a sign that we are not *sincere* in our attempts upon *any*, & that what we have done, was not performed upon *good* and *divine* motives.

Sincerity is discovered by *growth*, and this is the surest *mark* that I know of *Trial*. So that we have no reason to *presume*, though, as we think, we have

gone a *great way*, if we go not on. Nor on the other side, have we any to *despair*, though our present *attainments* are but *small*, if we are *proceeding*. The *buds* and tenderest *blossoms* of Divine *Grace*, are acceptable to God; when the *fairest leaves* of the *meer Animal Religion* are *nothing* in his estimate.

This is a great advantage we have from the Gospel; that *imperfection* will be accepted, where there is *sincerity*; whereas according to the measures of exact and rigorous Justice, no man could be made happy in the high degree of glory, but *he that was perfect*, and whose *victories* were *absolute*.

SECT. VII.

(VII.) **I**T may be collected from our Discourse, wherein the Power of Godliness consists, *viz.* In a progress towards perfection, and an intire victory over all the evils of our Natures. The *Forms* of Godliness are not only in the

the ceremonies of *Worship*, and external actions of feigned *Piety*; But all the fine things of the *Animal Religion*, I have mentioned, are of *this kind*, and they are the *worst sort*; By the *grosser Forms* men hardly deceive others; by *these* they effectually gull themselves. So that many that vehemently oppose *Forms*, are the greatest *Formalists* themselves. *Forms* of *Worship* may well agree with the *Power of Godliness*; when as *zeal against Forms*, may be a *Form* it self: whatever makes shew of *Religion* and doth not make us *better*, that's a *Form*, at least to us. There are *Spiritual Forms*, as well as *those* of the other sort, and *these* are most deadly. *Poyson* is worst in *Aquavite*. He that speaks his prayers *ex tempore* with *vehemence* & *lowdness*, if he strive not against his *ill nature* and *self will*, is as much a *Formalist*, as he that tells his *Prayers* by his *Beads*, and understands not one word he saith. And those that run away from *Forms* in *Churches*, meet more dangerous ones in *Barns* and *private corners*.

Orthodox Opinions, devout Phrases, set Looks, melting Tones, affected Sighs, and vehement Raptures, are often meer Forms of Godliness, that proceed from the Animal Religion, which it self is a Form likewise. O that the observers of so many motes in their Brothers eye, would learn to throw out the Beams of their own!

The Form of Godliness that pretends itself to be *no more*, is not *so hurtful*: But the *Forms*, that call themselves the *Power*, are *deadly*. 'Tis the *Formality* and *Superstition* of *Separatists* that keeps on the *Separation*: They contend for *phancies* and *arbitrary trifles*, *We* for *order* and *obedience*. The People are abused by *names*, and being frightened by the *shadows* of *Superstition* and *Formality*, they run into the worst *Formality*, and *stillest Superstition* in the World. The *Kingdom of heaven* consists not in *meats* and *drinks*, Rom. xiv. 17. neither in *Circumcision*, nor *Uncircumcision*, 1 Cor vii. 19, not in *zeal* for little things, nor

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The power of Religion lies in using Divine aids heartily and constantly, in order to the overcoming the difficulties of our way. This Godliness is not exercised so much in reforming others, as our selves; The chief design is to govern within, and not to make Laws for the World without us. This is that Wisdom that is from above, which is pure and peaceable, Jam. iii. 17. It makes no noise and bluster abroad, but quietly minds its own business at home.

So that certainly the best men have not always had the greatest fame for Godliness; as the wisest have very seldom been the most popular. They are the effects of the Animal Religion that make the biggest shew. The voice of true Religion is heard in quiet, it sounds not in the corners of the street. The power of Godliness is seen in Justice, Meekness, Humility, and Charity, things that look not so splendidly as the Spiritual Forms.

And

And thus of the *INFERENCES* and *COROLLARIES* that may be drawn from my Discourse, which though they cannot all be inferred from any of its minute and separated parts, yet they lie in the design and contexture of it.

CHAP. V.

Practical Advice for a CONCLUSION.

I Hasten now to Advice for Practice. The way of Happiness is *difficult*, but the *difficulties* may be overcome by *striving*. A little will not do; many *seekers are shot out*; what remains then, but that we persuade our selves to *strive*, and that *diligently*, with *constant resolution and endeavour*.

We were made for Happiness, and Happiness all the World seeks: *Who*
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The Way to Happinesse.

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will shew us any good? Psal. iv. 6. is the voice of all the Creatures. We have sought it long in emptinesse, and shadows; and that search hath stil ended in shame and disappointment. Where true substantial Felicity is, we know, and the Way we know, Joh. xiv. 4. It is not hid from us in Clouds and thick Darknesse; or if it were, 'twere worth our pains to search after it. It is not at so great a distance, but it may be seen, yea, it may be brought so near as to be felt. Though the way is streight, yet 'tis certain; or if it were otherwise, who would not venture his pains upon the possibility of such an issue? Many Difficulties are in it; but our Incouragements and Assistances are infinite. The love of God, and the gift of his son: the blood of Christ, and his intercession: the aids of the Spirit, and the Directions of the Gospel: the Invitations and Promises, the rare Precepts, and incomparable Examples of those holy men that have gone before us. These are mighty helps and

and great *motives* to assist us in *striving*, and to quicken us to it.

Let us then arise in the strength of *Faith*, and in the encouragement of *those aids*, and attempt with courage upon the *Difficulties* of our way. Let us engage our *deepest Resolutions*, and most *diligent endeavours*. Here is no need to *deliberate*, the things are *necessary*, the *benefits unspeakable*, and the *event* will be *glorious*. It is no Question, I hope, *whether God, or the Creature is to be first chosen*; *whether Heaven or Hell be better*? and therefore there is no cause that we should *stay and consider*; we cannot be *rash here*, we cannot *hurt* our selves by a too *sudden ingagement*, we have *delayed too long* already, and every *moment* we sit still, is *one* lost to our *Duty*, and our *Happiness*. Let us resolve then, and *begin with courage*, and *proceed with diligence*, 'tis our *End* and *Felicity* for which we are to strive: and every thing is *active* for its end and *Perfection*.

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the Designs of Providence : the *Heavens* are in restless *motion*, and the *Clouds* are still carrying about their *fruitfull Waters* ; the *sluggish Earth* it self is always putting forth in variety of *Trees*, and *Grass*, and *Flowers* ; the *Rivers* run towards the *Sea*, the *Brooks* move towards *them*, and the *Sea* within it self. Thus all things even in *inanimate Nature* may mind us of acting towards our end. And if we look a little higher, the *Beasts* of the Field, the *Fowls*, and *Cattel*. and *creeping things* are diligent in *striving* after the *good* and *perfection* of their *Natures*, and *Solomon* sends the *Sluggard* to those little *Insects* the *Ant* and *Bee*, to teach him activity and diligence, *Prov. vi. 6.* And shall the *Beasts* act more *reasonably* than the professed *Sons of Reason* ? May it not shame *us*, that we need *instruction* from the *Creatures* that have no *understanding* ? With what face can we carry our heads so high, and look down with *Contempt* upon *inferiour Animals*,

Animals, when *they* live more *wisely* and more *regularly*, than we.

The Sum is, *All things* are incessantly *moving towards an End*; and Happiness is *ours*, which therefore should engage our most careful Thoughts, and most active Endeavours.

We are solicitous and diligent about things of infinitely *less* moment, and in effect of *none*, viz. *uncertain* Riches, *sensual* Pleasures, and *worldly* Honours; though the way to *these* is sufficiently *difficult* and *uneasie*, yet we are not *discouraged*: we attempt all those *Difficulties* with an *obstinate* Courage, though without promise of any *equal* assistance, or assurance of success. We are often *defeated* in our pursuits, and yet we *go on*. We are *overmaster'd* by *cross* events, and yet we *try again*. We *miss* our *happiness*, we have attain'd our *end*, & yet we are as *active* in courting disappointment another time: either we attain not the *things* we seek, or find no *true satisfaction* in them, or they *die* in our hands *presently*, and yet we *strive*.

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And doth not this *activity* about *uncertain, unsatisfying Trifles*, shamefully reprove our Negligence in reference to our *great End, Happiness, and Perfection*; in striving for which we have all the *powers of Heaven* to aid us, and the *Word of God*, and the *Bloud of his Son*, and the *experience* of all that ever try'd to assure us that we shall neither fail of the *things we seek*, nor of the *pleasure* that we *expect* from them. And why then do we *lazily* sit down, and with the sluggard say, *There is a Lion in the way*, while we despise greater discouragements, when vain things are to be sought? The Merchant doth not give off, because there are Storms, and the numerous Dangers of the deep to be met with in his way to the *Indies*: nor the Souldier lay by his Arms, because of the hazards and toils of War. And do we act *couragiously* for *petty purchases*; & faint & despond when we are to *strive* for *Crowns & eternal Glories*.

'Tis true indeed our own *natural strength* is *small*, in proportion to the

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Difficulties We are to in counter; but the *Grace of God is sufficient for us*, 2 Cor. xii. 9. & we may do all things through Christ that strengthens us, *Phil.* iv. 13. Nature is *weak*, and *imperfect*, but we are not left in the condition of *meer nature*: For we are not under the Law, but under Grace, Rom. vi. 14. We are under the *influences* of the *holy Spirit*, which will remove the *mountains*, and plain the way before us, if we take care to ingage those aids by *Faith* and *sincere* endeavour.

For this we may be sure of, That *God will never be wanting to us*, if we are not so unto our selves. So that the case as to our *natural inability*, and the *assistance* of Gods Spirit, seems to be thus. A man in a Boat is carried from the Harbour he designs, by the violence of the Current; he is not able only by plying of the Oar, to overcome the resistance of the Tide; but a gentle Gale blows with him, which will not of it self neither carry him up against the Torrent: *Neither* of them will do it *singly*: but if he

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hoist the sail, and use the Oar too, this unaided force prevails; and he gets happily to the Harbour. This methinks resembles our condition; we are carried down the torrent of evil inclinations & affections, our own unaided force is too little for that great resistance: but the holy spirit is with us, it breaths upon us, and is ready to assist, if we are so to use it, & by the superaddition and ingagement of those blessed Aids, there is no evil in our natures but may be overcome. So that we have no reason to be discouraged at the apprehension of our impotence, out of weaknesse we shall be made strong, Heb. xi. 24. If we imploy our Talent, though it be but a very small one, we shall have more, Mat. xxv. 29. And if we accept of those divine helps, and use them, what was before, to meer natural consideration, uneasy, will be pleasant and sweetly relishing.

One of the greatest Difficulties in the way of Religion, is to begin: the first steps are roughest to those feet that have been unaccustomed to it. The helps and

manifold encouragements we shal meet with in the *Progresse*, will render it more agreeable and *delightful*. Those very *toils* will be *gratefull*; and we know there is scarce any great *sense* of *pleasure*, but where there is some *Difficulty* and *Pain*. Even our *Work* it self will be *Wages*. And 'tis not only the *End* of *Wisdom* that is *pleasantness*, but the *very way* *Pro. iii. 17*. So that thogh we are call'd upon to *strive*, and to *run*, and to *fight*, (which words import *Labour*) yet we are not required to quit our *pleasures*, but to *change* the *objects* of them; to leave the *delights* of *swine* for those of *Angels*; *sensual* for *spiritual* *Satisfactions*.

Thus all things encourage, and invite us to *strive*; God calls upon us, and our own *interests* call, *Christ Jesus* came to ingage us to this *Work*, and the *Holy Spirit* waits to assist it. If notwithstanding all this, we sit still, our *Negligence* will be *inexcusable* and *fatal*: or if we *arise*, and go a little forward, and then lay us down to take our *ease* and *rest*,
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our state in the judgment of one that knew, will be worse, more desperate, and excuseless, 2. Pet. ii. 31.

I conclude all then, in the words of the blessed *Apostle*, 1 Cor. xv. *Therefore my beloved Brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your Labour is not in vain in the Lord: To him be Glory, and Honour henceforth, and for ever. A M E N.*

FINIS.



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